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FINNISH NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO
THE FINNISH BROADCASTING COMPANY

**REPORT ON A ROUND TABLE "COMMUNICATION 1980"
ON MASS COMMUNICATION RESEARCH AND POLICY**

HANKO, FINLAND, APRIL 9-11, 1970

HELSINKI 1970

Copies are available from the Section for Long-Range Planning
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Finland

ROUND TABLE "COMMUNICATION 1980" ON MASS COMMUNICATION RESEARCH AND POLICY

HANKO, FINLAND, APRIL 9-11, 1970

PARTICIPANTS

Foreign visitors:

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Mr. Lewis Nkosi, author and critic, South Africa, now residing in London

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Professor Yrjö Ahmavaara, Research Expert, FBC

Mr. Otso Appelqvist, student

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Mr. Thomas Romantschuk, news reporter, representing the Radio and Television Editors Association

Mr. Holger Rotkirch, former FBC lawyer

Mr. Keijo Savolainen, Program Supervisor, FBC

Miss Margaretha Starck, Program Activity Planner, FBC

Mr. Nils-Börje Stormbom, Head of Long-Range Planning, FBC

Mrs. Elina Suominen, social-psychologist

Mr. Mauri Vakkilainen, Program Council Secretary, FBC

Mr. Tapio Varis, researcher, Research Institute, University of Tampere



PREFACE

In the beginning of 1969, the Finnish National Commission for Unesco was granted a subsidy of \$ 3 000, as part of the Unesco participation program for 1969/70, based on the following preliminary Finnish suggestion:

New demands are presented to the communication system, new techniques open ways to respond to them. It can be easily foreseen that this double perspective will mean revolutionary changes in the system of communications in the next years to come. But what is likely to be the combined effect of these tendencies, particularly in limited geo-cultural entities? An international round table of specialists representing the fields concerned will make an effort to disclose the predictable effects of parallel and conflicting trends and focus larger interest on the need of clarifying the basic premises of a national communications policy.

The Finnish Commission then asked the undersigned -- who is a member of the Commission's section for social sciences and communications -- to form a working group to plan the conference; at the same time the Finnish Broadcasting Company was asked to serve as its organizer. Invited to participate in the planning group were Mr. Eino S. Repo, then the Director-General of the FBC and since the beginning of 1970 the Director of Radio, Mr. Nils-Börje Stormbom, Head of the Section for Long-Range Planning of the FEC, Mr. Yrjö Ahmavaara, Research Expert of the Section, and Mr. Martti Silvennoinen, Head of Programs in the radio service of the FBC and also a member of the Finnish National Commission for Unesco.

The planning group suggested that the emphasis should be placed on electronic media -- on broadcasting -- and that the approach of the conference should be global and critical with regard to present mass communication systems and especially to their ultimate goals. The idea was to set up a round table with a radical "goal-oriented" approach rather than a conventional "system-supporting" approach, and the participants were therefore sought from among persons oriented toward cultural criticism rather than from among conventional communication researchers.

The plan, after being accepted by the Commission, was put into action by inviting appropriate foreign specialists to participate in a round table, first scheduled for the beginning of January 1970. Altogether nine persons were contacted. Only two were finally able to participate, and the most convenient time for them as well as for the Finnish participants was the beginning of April. The choice of the participants and the rest of the organizing work was taken care of by the original planning group with the help of the resources of the FBC. As the place of the conference, the Hotel Regatta in Hanko, a small town in South-Western Finland, was chosen.

The conference used both English and Finnish as its working languages. In this report the Finnish contributions have been translated into English; at the same time they have been edited as concisely as possible from the point of view of internationally relevant considerations, which makes them more like summaries than verbatim transcriptions. In other respects the report closely follows the course of the conference, which, according to a preliminary program, was designed to fall into three main

topics: (1) outlines for critical research into mass communications, (2) International perspectives in broadcasting, both of these topics to be covered during the first afternoon of the conference; and (3) the functions and goals of mass communication, together with problems of democratic control over broadcasting, to be covered during the second day. The morning of the third day was reserved for formulating conclusions.

Helsinki, April 1970

Kaarlo Nordenström

INTRODUCTION: A POLICY APPROACH TO COMMUNICATIONS FUTUROLOGY

by

Kaarle Nordenstreng

The following two decades will see a revolution in communications in two ways. First of all, the technological development which began in the 1940's and 1950's with the transistor and the satellite will come to affect the daily life of human beings through its many applications; in the means of communications there will be a shift by the year 2000 to the age of the McLuhan global village in both developed and underdeveloped lands. Secondly, a revolutionary development will take place in the fields of message content and control of communication media: the aims of mass communication will have to be newly appraised.

We can obtain a picture of the development taking place in communication resources from the writings of the prophets of communication technology. Thus, according to the American David Sarnoff (Looking Ahead, New York 1968), as summarized by Edward W. Ploman (Jord, rymd och kommunikationer, Stockholm 1969, p. 197) as follows:

With the aid of satellites, laser rays and ultraminiature equipment it will become possible, by the year 2000, to have visual, auditory or written contact with anyone at all, any time and any place. Satellites weighing many hundreds of tons will convey telephone conversations and radio and television as also other forms of communication from country to country, continent to continent, and from the earth to spacecraft and planets. Private individuals can be in contact with each other by means of small table devices or wall-sized three-dimensional color-TV surfaces. Finally people will be equipped with a miniature TV-transmitter/receiver enabling them to communicate with each other by radio and satellite routes, using personal channels resembling today's telephone numbers. Intercontinental mail will be delivered via satellites and facsimile reproduction. Satellite-TV will be able to transmit programs around the globe directly to homes, and a billions of people may follow the same program, the language of which will be automatically translated. Newspapers will be sent from continent to continent and printed in a flash. In the year 2000 presumably all important newspapers will be published as simultaneous editions all over the world.

Another American, Arthur C. Clarke, predicts Orbital Newspaper, which will be read by dialling, like a telephone number, the required items of the information available onto one's own screen and possibly recording the picture on a copying device connected to the receiver. An electronic library would work in the same way, opening up completely new possibilities for scientific research. Our grandchildren's world in short, according to Clarke (Voices from the sky, London 1969, p. 121):

All knowledge will be open to them, all the museums and libraries of the world will be extensions of their living rooms. Marvellous machines, with unlimited information-handling capacity, will be able to speak directly into their minds.

It should also be noted that this technological picture of the future is not limited to the developed part of the world, but will reach out significantly also to the developing countries. The 2/3 of mankind who at present lack communication media in keeping with UNESCO norms, will shift directly to modern electronic mass media because of their economic advantage.

The new communications technology will mean decisive changes in the functioning of society. On the one hand, all activities requiring communication between individuals will speed up -- for instance, trade and the political decision-making process. This speeding up of social processes in itself, however, hardly involves a qualitative change as yet: it is only a question of more effective use of previously existing links, a quantitative change. On the other hand there is nevertheless reason to speak of a qualitative change also, resulting from the fact that communication by means of technical devices is becoming the most important form of social change. To borrow from Ploman again (op. cit., p. 205):

During the first half of the 20th century we have, above all, endeavored to transport people and goods more quickly, further, more effectively and more comfortably by means of roads, aeroplanes, railways and trucks. As a side-effect we have produced towns paralyzed with traffic, air, water and noise pollution, and traffic death. - The new communications technology offers a way out. If we succeed in transmitting sounds, pictures, numbers, moving pictures and whole books in large quantities dependably and at low cost, we can replace personal and goods traffic by information traffic. A society based on goods transport would change to one based upon transportation of ideas.

The new technology will change the traditional field of communication in two ways: the number of channels will increase and present communications media will merge. Both of these tendencies are due to the break-through of electronic communications media; electronic impulses are the most effective and economical way of transmitting messages from one place to another, especially over long distances. The traditional communications media -- letters, books and newspapers -- have their future, but different in their technique: they will be linked more and more closely to electronic communication.

The integration of different communications media will bring about the centralization of the communication organization and, finally, integration into the rest of the political-economic system. Indications of this course of development can already be seen: the tendency towards centralization of the press in all Western countries, the fusion of broadcasting and publishing companies in the USA and the growing dependence of the owners of the communication media on economic life and political decision-makers. With the speeding up and diversification of communication technology, the power relations controlling the media seem to interlock more and more compactly. The conclusion of the American researcher Robert L. Bishop concerning the European press system is significant (Modernization and the European press, unpublished manuscript, University of Michigan 1969):

To the author, the conclusion that the mass media are becoming far more a subsystem within the economic and marketing system than an independent political voice is inescapable. The conscientious journalist is faced with, to borrow an old phrase, a profession within an industry. Regrettable as that fact may be, it is still better to deal with the relationship openly than to deny or ignore it.

This kind of development points frighteningly toward an Orwellian picture of the future -- a picture of a technologically advanced but systematically controlled and directed human society. The new electronic media, instead of serving to enrich the life and experience of the individual according to the promise held out to us by the prophets of communication technology, will be exploited for the manipulation of individuals in the interests of the prevailing political-economic system. The basic problem in considering the future of mass communication is to define the proper role and task of the mass media.

In professional circles this question of tasks and goals has been badly neglected. As observed by Ploman (op. cit., p. 81):

The technicians have done a good job, regardless of the motives which have guided development. Their imagination has left all others behind, with the result that the adaptation of society to the new technology is lagging behind ... The same problem is illustrated by the following situation, which occurs only too often: an international meeting of specialists in various fields is organized to discuss the use of communication satellites. The questions placed before the technicians at such a meeting are such as what can and cannot be done with satellite systems, what restrictions must be taken into account, how quickly we can expect the development of new satellite types and stations etc. Finally one of the technologists practically loses his temper: tell us what gadgets you want and we'll make them for you -- and tell you in advance what they will cost. Generally this is followed by a deep silence. The educationalists, TV reporters, librarians and journalists have been able to set forth only vague wishes, familiar to all. There is an impulse to shift the final responsibility for decisions onto the technologists, as a consequence of the fear and uneasiness brought about by sudden freedom from technical obstacles.

In practice this lack of task definition has led to a situation in which the new media technology is exploited by the existing power structure for the preservation of the economic, political and military status quo. This has, however, in turn engendered a reaction characterized precisely by a re-appraisal of the functions of the mass media, by an emphasis on the independence of the media and by an "individual-centered" rather than a "system-centered" attitude. As Herbert Schiller (Mass Communications and American Empire, New York 1969, p. 150-151) puts it:

The road to the social use of technology runs through the rugged terrain of interest groups, privileged classes, national power, and self-satisfied decision-makers. Prodding, opposing, and perhaps even storming and overturning these ancient but enduring governing coalitions are the means by which the humanistic use of the new technology may be secured. It is willful escapism to believe that technology, by itself, will soon force its way out of the restrictive social web that now surrounds it. The generalized insecurity overhanging industrially omnipotent and economically affluent America is strong evidence of how badly the campaigns to liberate technology have gone in recent years. - The utilization of the new communications technology for human needs requires a thorough reordering of the social process which regulates the informational system at all levels of personal and national existence. The dilemma is, however, that the controlling crust of the industrial state calls on the communications media to resist the social reorganization that must precede the technological reformation.

Schiller and the other specialists who have considered the question of the future role of mass communication, such as Hilding Eek, Wilbur Schramm and Dallas Smythe, all underline the importance of international agreements. Among their objectives has been the establishment of a "world television", under the control of the United Nations, which would be responsible for the production and distribution of programs for broadcast by satellite over national boundaries. However, no detailed plans have been possible, in part because of the negative attitude of the United States, which is bent on preserving its satellite superiority; a worldwide mass communication policy so far exists only in the minds of few individual observers.

At this point, what we need above all is a radical analysis of the tasks of mass communication, together with concrete steps, based on such an analysis, to ensure accurate and many-sided

information transmission on both the national and the international level. Responsible journalists and researchers should take part in the reaction which has been aroused in critical observers by the "natural" development in the field of mass communications.

TOWARD GOAL-ORIENTED CRITICAL RESEARCH FOR COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA

by

Dallas W. Smythe

Purpose: To raise questions rather than to answer them. In principle most or many of the questions do not permit once-and-for-all answers. They arise from and should contribute to the on-going processes of life in an environment which is part of the life process.

(1) Is man human because he is a social animal? That is to say, is man's humanity necessarily a consequence of his relations with his fellowmen? That is, his relations through the group processes of institutions such as family, church, school, business, labour union, political party, local, national and supranational institutions? Or to turn the question inside out, is it possible for an individual to be human in the absence of such institutional relationships?

The reason for putting the first question so emphatically "Is man human because he is a social animal?" is because in the Western context in which I live this seems not to be answered in the affirmative very generally or very consciously. We are still under the influence of John Locke and Hobbs in the West and our rural society is such that it is a negation of animalistic individuals, and this, unfortunately, I think you have to recognize; therefore I wanted to declare my own bias by emphasizing the social nature of man.

(2) Is "information" (defined by Norbert Wiener as "a name for the content of what is exchanged with the outer world as we adjust to it and make our adjustments felt upon it") the means by which man's relations are conducted?

If one uses Wiener's definition of information, the whole body of human knowledge falls within the ambit of communication when approached not from conventional disciplinary boundaries but from the study of man as a message and symbol-using animal, and if one can conceive of this broad approach to communications, then it makes it obvious that what we call communications theory today is absurdly under-developed, immature and partial. I don't derogate the fact that there are useful bits of communications theory lying around, but there certainly is no grand theory and nothing which is compatible with the scope implicit in the definition of Information.

(3) Is the flow of information the substance which constitutes actions?

(4) Is power the capacity to affect or take action?

(5) Is the power structure the pattern of human organizations which determines what actions will be taken?

(6) Does the power structure of any society work through patterns of control over decisions as to what kinds of information flow between what people, when? And does control of the flow of information serve the purposes of the controllers?

The reason for accenting the power structure is because as a social scientist it seems to me that a fruitful way of analyzing most social phenomena is in terms of who makes what decisions, and how and why, and this inevitably raises the question of power structure and the dynamics of its operation and the way in which it is composed.

(7) Are the policies (defined as continuities in decisions) of man's group processes formulated so as to optimize man's welfare? (The economist Harold Innis defined the purpose of our institutions as to help us to make the right decisions at the right times).

(8) Are the policies of our traditional "educational" institutions (schools, universities, etc.) suffering from "lag"? That is to say, are they continuing to perpetuate uncritically policies which derived from a less technologically mechanized age? In this connection recall that "education" is a two-edged sword: it may destroy either ignorance or knowledge (Coomaraswamy).

(9) Are not the policies of the mass media of communication (broadcasting, cinema, press, books, magazines) and of other cultural industry (defining cultural industry as the production and sale of all consumer goods and services) today replacing in substantial degree the educational functions which earlier were performed by the family, the schools, and other non-industrial institutions? Are market forces increasingly the educators of our populations?

(10) Do market forces (by definition impersonal and motivated by the market) educate us for market behaviour?

(11) Are not the policies of the mass media of communication and of other cultural industry biased by their institutional purposes?

(12) If cultural industry increasingly conducts our education, are the effects such as to optimize man's welfare?

(13) In the accelerating pace of technological change/development must we not distinguish between administrative decisions (which always raise the Eichmann problem of obedience to authority) on the one hand, and critical decisions, on the other hand, and make places for the latter explicitly in our institutional processes (as "cultural ombudsmen")?

Here I come to the distinction which you hopefully, I mean happily, are so sensitive to in Finland, but which in the Western world generally is not a very popular distinction -- that between administrative and critical research or administrative and critical decisions. Even though Paul Lazarsfeld blessed it with his endorsement in an article in 1943, the distinction is not very popular in the United States. In connection with this I think of the Eichmann problem, as I call it. It is a problem of habitual obedience to authority in making decisions, and I understand you are familiar with the research of Stanley Milgram of Yale University. I brought along an excerpt from Esquire magazine entitled "If Hitler asked you to electrocute a stranger, would you?" Probably. This research was to simulate an SR learning experiment. It was a phony but the subjects who were brought in

didn't know it was a phony, and the set-up was that the subject was to operate a console administering electric shocks with gradually increasing intensity to a supposed other volunteer who really was a confederate of the experimenter. As many as 2/5 of the Americans that were taking the test went the full limit because the supervisor said he took the responsibility and all you had to do was follow orders and push the button, and they did. Well it seems to me that next to the research on the authoritarian personality that Adorno did 20 years ago, this is one of the most dramatic illustrations of the built-in and culturally determined propensity of our Western culture to brainwash people into taking essentially vicious and destructive courses of action. So this is why I emphasize the distinction between administrative and critical decision making.

(14) Should research by or on the policies and operations of cultural industry (including mass media of communication) be substantially all devoted to critical research on the performance vs. the goals of the industry/agency, and to critical research on the goals of the industry/agency vs. social goals?

(15) While all cultural industry has the function to some degree, do not the mass media specialize in two social functions of prime importance to the goal setting function of society:

(a) The provision of an agenda (daily, weekly, monthly, intermittently) of matters for our attention (what to buy, what is worthy of notice among all the events taking place in the world, what issues are controversial, how should controversial issues be posed -- note that every question carries its answer on its back as a snail carries its shell)? Note that what is omitted from the agenda may in fact kill us (pollution, armaments, etc.).

The agenda-setting function of the mass media and of popular culture in general refers to what appears in your television newscasts, what appears in your headlines in the newspaper, what appears on the cover advertisement of your magazines. I think there are a lot of researchable implications to this agenda-setting function which have not been addressed from a critical point of view and I would suppose that in Finland where it is possible for you to have a conference of this character, you have the potential for doing that kind of research.

(b) The provision of a surrogate (or substitute) for public opinion as a basis for policy-making? The time or the means (if not also the will) to ascertain the "public" opinion of the whole population is only available occasionally in respect to long-range decisions (e.g. should a nation align itself with one or another power bloc of states, should a church merge with another church?). For medium and short-range decisions, other substitute means must be found to measure or to create the semblance of public opinion to provide a basis for the making of the decisions. You just don't have the means to consult public opinion day to day, hour to hour, in the way in which the policy-making process would require. The "resonance" given to "trial balloons", "leaks", from contending factions in the power structure by the mass media (by news treatment, editorials, commentary, etc.) in fact are taken to represent public opinion in making new policy. This process is employed by all organizations with effective access to the mass media. When employed by sub-national organizations, it is commonly called "public relations"; when employed by national government, "managing the press". The substance is the same in either case. I am not sure how that function is accommodated within the informational frame of reference which I understand you people all have been considering.

Suggested research implications: Determine critically the basis, the rationale, for the selection of news items for the "agenda" published by newspapers, radio broadcast systems. Determine critically the extent, causes, purposes, effects of trial balloons, leaks, etc.

(16) What general formulations of universal goals in programming mass media are possible here and

now? While I don't have any general formulation of universal goals for programming, I do find that in reading your background papers that your work here on your informational basis of analyzing program policy, e.g. for feeding news, is far in advance of anything I am aware of that is going on elsewhere in the world in this area. And you may be hot on the track of some very important general formulations of how you can design operational policy to conform well with sensibly defined goals and mass media programming. To illustrate one partial and tentative such formulation, consider the following derived from the problem of broadcasting which deals with the cultures of different nations:

"The policy to be pursued in international exchange of cultural materials is that there should be coexistence and mutual appreciation of different cultures. This means that each culture's universal meaning may be appreciated in its unique cultural context with mutual comprehensibility and mutual non-displacement."

If such a goal were accepted explicitly, one would need to produce broadcast programs with the goal in mind. Nations might establish "cultural screens" designed to filter out materials coming to them which did not meet this standard. Such a goal would provide researchable projects of the highest importance. Might this formulation be adapted to intra-national cultural issues: to ethnic groups, religious faiths, etc.?

I do not want anybody in the room to think that I would happily see any nation unconsciously accept a kind of Orwellian communications technology as admirably described in Nordenstreng's paper without having taken the thing through all of the questioning processes that I have suggested in my presentation. The kind of technological utopia -- the big screen on the wall, all banking, all grocery shopping done by pushing buttons and so forth -- seems to me on the basis of what I know about young people today to be a quite unacceptable one because it assumes that people are basically subject to treatment like statistical information by computers. I said the same thing in Montreal when the Chairman of the Unesco meeting of experts on mass media and society portrayed this Orwellian future for us as something that was pre-ordained, and I said "Who says it is pre-ordained"; it seems to me a ruler would be very stupid to force this kind of a technology onto a population which may throw it out onto the streets.

MASS COMMUNICATIONS IN AFRICA

by

Lewis Nkosi

This paper is divided roughly into two sections. First, I deal with the state of mass communications in Africa yesterday and today. Then toward the end of the paper I make some tentative suggestions as to what role mass communications ought to play in the future.

Though setting goals for the future is most important, it is not possible to know what these ought to be without taking into account what is or has been done already in the field of mass communications in Africa. Also in discussing a subject like this one has to take into account the very special conditions which exist in the Third World. For the purposes of my paper I am going to use Africa

as a paradigm for Third World societies mainly as a convenience since I know very little as to what is happening on other continents other than Africa; but also because what is happening in Africa is usually what is happening in most communities in the Third World countries. In any case, in establishing goals for Africa objectives must be related to the colonial background which, whether one likes it or not, has already partly conditioned the pattern for the future. At the same time the structure of mass communications in Africa and other parts of the Third World still owes a lot to the continuing relationship between these societies and their former colonial masters. The values, criteria and structure still owe a great deal to this relation: that is, the former colonial possession may now be largely self-governing, but they are still poor, without much technological know-how, and therefore are treated mainly as a dumping ground for colonial products of dubious value. Necessarily, these include cultural products like books, radio and television programs. Also the ideological assumptions most readily accepted are those imparted by the cultures of departing colonial masters. Therefore, through a process of osmosis African states have been made to swallow all the clichés of capitalist bourgeois Western societies without so much as offering a choice to the people through frank and free discussion of the alternatives. In most African states to be a Marxist socialist or communist is to be a freak, which is surprising considering the fact that Africa is in a unique position to choose the best suitable system; without looking into the role of elitist education, into the role of mass media and the continuity of social and political structures set up by former colonial masters it would be impossible to understand why certain ideas are readily embraced by African statesmen and others are eschewed almost out of hand.

What was Left Behind

First, let me deal with mass communications against the background not only of the colonial heritage but also that of Africa's own weakness for not having developed written languages in time to counteract the most insidious propaganda injected into African societies by European colonizers. I should like therefore to deal mainly with the electronic media in this paper: that is to say, radio and television and in passing, the cinema.

Though the press has played a significant role in the development of African nationalism; though it continues to do so in fostering national consciousness, in creating a bridge of communication not only between Africa and the World, but between African states themselves, it is the electronic media which open up truly new vistas for the future of mass communications in Africa.

This is so because Africa is in a hurry to develop economically. She is in a hurry to learn and to change - that is to say, to enter into the 20th Century. Or perhaps one ought to say the 21st Century because it is my belief that, given the technological advances being made this century, Africa will probably make many shortcuts in her scientific, economic and cultural development, shortcuts which were not given to European countries who had to work their way painfully through written languages, through scripts and expensive books. The storage of information through memory tanks like computers and tapes is in itself a stupefying advance on the use of books and hand manuscripts utilized in Europe in the Middle Ages. What this means is that the development of techniques for the teaching of large numbers of illiterate adults to absorb a certain amount of useful information without first acquiring the ability to read is now within the realm of possibility in the Third World. For many of you who have been brought up on the written word this may not mean a great deal; to some of you it may even mean a certain loss of intellectual energy; but for us in the Third World it opens up fantastic possibilities for widening the perspective of useful citizens who may otherwise be lost forever to ordinary educational institutions.

Let me illustrate for you a simple problem in Africa. It is the problem of the Somalis who possess no script for writing down a language spoken by nearly five million people in East Africa. In an interesting article published in 'A Handbook of African Affairs'¹, Jeanne Contini explained the Somali predicament this way: "The struggle to establish a national identity is common to all newly emerging independent countries, but the three-year-old Somali Republic faces a special problem, as basic as it is unusual in this day and age. It is still searching for a written alphabet to express the language spoken by the 4 million to 5 million Somalis of the African Horn.

"While a Somali from Djibouti on the coast of French Somaliland can speak in the same tongue as a Somali living in Mogadiscio or in the Northern Frontier District of Kenya, they must write to each other in a foreign language. Three foreign languages are used in the republic today - English in the formerly British-protected North, Italian in the south, and Arabic as the language of Islam, the state religion.

"The capital city of Mogadiscio is an administrative Tower of Babel, with the result that translators rate high in the hierarchy of foreign experts. All official documents, including legislation, verbatim records of parliament, treaties, etc, must be translated eventually into all three languages. Public-school children speak Somali at home and in the classroom, but are taught to read and write in either English or Italian plus Arabic, depending on where the school is situated. This state of affairs clearly hinders the advance of literacy, and complicates the whole educational system."

In this situation you can deduce for yourself the far-reaching significance of the Radio as the medium of the spoken word. Indeed, from the foregoing you will have deduced that the spoken rather than the written word has a very special place in Africa, not only because a large proportion of the population is illiterate but also because of structural problems of which the Somali case is just one good example.

There are other problems stemming specifically from the colonial past. It is not unknown in Africa for a people speaking the same language to belong to separate states or separate regions whose official languages are either French or English. In such cases people of the same ethnic group cannot understand one another across frontiers arbitrarily created by occupying powers unless they can speak in their own African languages. The newspapers are usually published in one of the two European languages or, if they are in one of the African languages shared by the two divided halves, prove too costly to circulate far afield. In such areas it is only the African-language programs on the radio which can bridge the gulf.

Indeed, the question of language is peculiarly relevant to the problem of communication of every type in Africa. European languages have been both a blessing and a curse. It is true that through English and French Africans from far-flung parts of Africa can easily communicate; at the same time where the same tribe was divided between two colonial powers who were themselves speaking different languages, the divided halves are instantly made strangers to each other. Even some of the problems which bedevil intellectual discussion are themselves structured in the very languages of the former colonial masters. It is not by accident, for instance, that it is the French-speaking Africans who came up with the concept of negritude, hotly disputed by most English-speaking African intellectuals. This essentialist concept (which means roughly that something in the psychic make-up of black men which separate them from white men) never took deep root in English-speaking Africa.

1 The Somalis: A Nation of Poets in Search of an Alphabet by Jeanne Contini (1964).

The reason was not simply to be found in the different types of colonization but in the very substance of the two European languages. The English language does not take kindly to this form of intellection. It is too blunt an instrument, too common-sensical. The best we could come up with to match the rather abstract French concept was Nkrumah's use of the phrase: 'The African Personality'.

At the African Writers' Conference I attended some eight years ago, a dispute arose between two West African intellectuals, one of whom spoke French and no English while the other spoke only English and no French. However, someone discovered they shared a common African language. It was jokingly suggested they may be able to resolve their intellectual dispute if they resorted to Yoruba. And indeed, to everyone's surprise, they discovered a common word in Yoruba which seemed to cover fairly precisely a concept they had difficulty conceptualizing in either French or English. This was clearly past a joke.

What I am suggesting in this roundabout way is that the European lingua francas have sometimes acted as a barrier to communication between people of the same tribe; that it is fairly difficult to overcome problems created by European balkanization, which lamentably failed to take into account national, tribal or cultural integrities simply by the use of books and newspapers. The cost of the written word is too inhibiting. The difficulty then can be overcome simply and cheaply by creating African language programs on the radio which are broadcast parallel to those in the European languages; and the radio being no respecter of frontiers it can enable people who share a common identity to communicate once again. I can see, of course, that African politicians who have inherited these small 'baronic' domains are not particularly anxious to increase intercommunication of this sort; but for those of us who are interested in the building up of large areas of unity and understanding this is devoutly to be wished.

When you deal with mass communication in Europe you are talking about the effect that mass communication has on language and how language is going to be attenuated and how things like literary forms will lose their elegance; for us it is simply a question of being in search of a language.

The lack of a written language which cannot, no matter how hard one tries, be blamed on European colonialists, is just one aspect of the matter. Yet the oral tradition possesses some benefits which anthropologists as well as sociologists have been at pains to point out. David Riesman points out, for instance, in his very interesting article: 'The Oral and Written Traditions'¹ that "in the remote islands of the Philippines messages are conveyed orally with an accuracy fabulous to us, aware as we are that a message or rumor need only pass through two or three persons before becoming unrecognizable". Similarly, the oral tradition developed in Africa to compensate for the lack of written language is of the richest significance.

What Riesman also notes is the very strict social stratification between the old, as repositories of tribal wisdom and knowledge, and the young who must sit at the feet of the elderly to imbibe such knowledge, that the oral tradition inspires. Written language, of course, destroys this system of hierarchy by providing different sources of information. The new mass media, however, by relying less on the ability to read and much more on spoken as well as other types of communication, are not likely to embarrass those in Africa who rely on the oral tradition for instruction as well as for entertainment. Indeed, the new mass media provide a meeting point between the oral traditions of the Third World and the technological societies of the West. The movement back to spoken poetry, for example, chanted to musical forms such as jazz, brings radio and television into the centre of Western literature, while dispensing with publication or book reading as an important element of

1 Riesman's Article appeared in Explorations in Communication: ed. by Carpenter & McLuhan.

appreciating a certain type of poetry. In the Third World Computers and other memory tanks could free the mind from the necessity of storing a great deal of information in the mind through memorizing while making certain forms of mental chores familiar in the West quite unnecessary. Technology is thus bringing the over-developed and the under-developed worlds closer together.

It would be less than honest of course to deny the great contribution made by the colonial powers to the development of mass communications in the Third World. According to John Wilkinson, a B.B.C. administrator who helped set up radio communications in Nigeria in 1927, there was not a single public service radio station broadcasting anywhere in what we now know as Black Africa. Today, 43 years later, there are 42 national sound radio services south of the Sahara. There are twenty television services. There are over 11 million radio sets, about 165,000 Television sets, 231 daily papers with a total readership of around three million.

Television is still a white elephant at the moment. Most people feel that African states could have waited until radio had been fully exploited before embarking on television programming, but though this was no doubt a mistake, probably motivated by desire for prestige among many African states, the continuous development of television electronics along with space techniques may yet make television a cheap means of communication by which millions of Africans as well as the rest of the Third World could immensely benefit. At the moment, at any rate, television probably serves about .001 per cent of the population in Africa.

The figures already mentioned above are in general not very impressive when you consider that a population of 250 million shares 11 million radio sets. In North America, on the other hand, it is said that a population of 225 million share 292 million radio sets (more than one per person) and that 85 million television sets are in use. Belgium alone, with a population of only 10 million people has 1,695,000 television sets.

However, these figures do not tell the whole story. In Africa a great number of human activities, including radio listening and television viewing, are still communal activities, with perhaps six to ten listeners sharing one set. If you take the lowest figure of six listeners per set you end up with a total of say 66 million listeners.

As I said before, the foundations for broadcasting in Africa were laid by colonial powers. The motive was never an altruistic one. Indeed, the first type of radio broadcasting by the British in East Africa was designed to serve only the white settler minority to the exclusion of the indigenous population. No one ever thought their interest needed catering to. This was about 1928. As a general rule both British and French broadcasting in the colonial days became part of a network of the administrative process keeping different parts of the overseas possession in communication with the mother countries. Apart from making known the wishes of the metropolitan governments to their colonial subjects, the purpose of radio communications was to create for the European settler abroad a sense of continuity with the home cultures, even though this meant European settlers in many parts of the empire aping metropolitan fashions months after they had become unfashionable in London, Paris and Brussels. It is therefore fair to say that broadcasting was generally regarded by European powers "as an important function of administration which might justify considerable expenditure and which demands careful investigation by all colonial governments."¹

Whatever the original intentions the B.B.C. was later to set up an overseas service which now

1 Plymouth Committee set up in Britain in 1936 to look into Broadcasting services in the colonies.

covers Africa, the Middle East, Asia and the Far East, including Japan, a tremendous network of skilled public enterprise and administration. Within the colonies themselves a machinery of broadcasting was set up which has formed the basis of the communications systems run by the African states themselves. Because of the groundwork the colonial powers provided, it meant that on taking over, African and other Third World Governments did not have to start entirely from the scratch, both in terms of equipment and the training of personnel. Today the B.B.C. Overseas Service provides millions of listeners in the Middle East, Africa and Asia with a daily service of news broadcast and current affairs programs: drama, business news, arts as well as sports coverage also form an important part of the service.

Let us take a brief look at the former French colonies. Before the Second World War, all stations in France were commercial. In the colonies however there were Government stations which were served by an agency called SORAFOM, an organization entrusted with the task of training, equipping and providing recorded programs for local radio stations. Developed after the War, this agency continued to operate right up to the time African states became independent. It was then replaced by another French Government organization called OCORA - the Office of Co-operation for Radio in Africa - which itself has been taken over by the French Government ORTF, whose lack of freedom from Government control was amply dramatized during the May 1968 strikes when a number of journalists resigned from the service. This great dependence by African states on such news, controlled from the Metropolitan centres, means that the African listener is receiving news that is pre-digested in such a way that a certain calculated response is induced from him.

"In every independent French-speaking African country," says Wilkinson, "the listener has been used to government-controlled radio stations with varying degrees of French influence since these states became independent. As a result, radio tends to be regarded as the President's publicity agent in French-speaking African states." (Emphasis mine).

The Cinema: Banality

Apart from radio and television, the cinema is another medium whose full potentiality has yet to be exploited in the Third World, especially in Africa. In Africa, at any rate, apart from newsreel and some educational films concerned with guidance and propaganda, the cinema has yet to make a contribution to the growing concern with art on the continent. Here is a medium which in other parts of the World is moving rapidly away from literature, especially the novel, a medium which in the hands of modern directors can and often does dispense with a written script. What this medium can do in tapping the resources of rich traditions in Africa (dance, music, poetry and sculpture) is too exciting to contemplate. However, up to now, with the exception of a few young African directors in French-speaking African states, the cinema has been almost entirely neglected in Africa, no doubt because of the tremendous costs involved in the production of films.

African states do not even own the means of distribution. In East Africa distribution is in the hands of two companies based in Nairobi. The first is 20th Century Fox which also owns some theatres and acts as the agent for M.G.M. and others and the rest of the business is in the hands of Indian Film Combines. According to a report by Jane Banerfield in the 1964 issue of Transition: "Most foreign films are shown for a short time, perhaps three days, and are invariably dubbed; the most common film fare are Indian films of quite incredible length and banality, and then American and British westerns, murder mysteries and spectaculars." This is mostly true of West Africa also, especially Nigeria. In Nigeria a few cinemas are in the hands of Indian expatriates who exhibit the

most appalling throwaways from Indian studios. Yet in terms of the population in Nigeria alone the potential market for the cinema in Africa is staggering.

In South Africa where I come from, the situation is even more absurd. The problem there is simply one of censorship which operates in such a way that nothing is shown in South African cinemas which is likely to disturb the uneasy sleep of its white citizens. To give some examples: any film showing a fight between white man and Negro, especially if a white man is beaten, is either cut or excluded altogether from public showing. From the opposite pole, a film showing black and white making love, not war, is also offensive to the Government sensibilities. Negroes in superior position to white men, scenes of interracial mixing, or even white people in bed together, may not be shown to black audiences, presumably on the grounds that naked white flesh may be so provocative to African servants that the white madam may not be safe. Incidentally, when the ban was lifted for the publication of Lady Chatterly's Lover in England, South Africa still maintained the ban. As one housewife wrote in a local newspaper: "How would you like a book like that to fall into the hands of your Native gardener?"

However, South Africa is an abnormality. There is no doubt at all that in the rest of Africa the future of cinema holds exciting possibilities. You can show films to large numbers of people anywhere: in public squares, in football enclosures, in school halls and other places simply by using mobile projecting units.

A Mass-Communicated Future

It is not possible to discuss any aspect of society without, sooner or later, coming to the question of the underlying ideology of that society. I think it was Franz Fanon who complained that what was wrong with Africa was lack of ideology. To talk of the possible contribution of mass communications to the future development of Africa, for instance, implies discussing social, economic and political goals of that continent. Naturally, Africa shares many problems with the rest of the Third World so that what is true of Africa is mainly true of the Third World.

I realize that in your discussion you seem to me to work within a much more complex and graspable reality, so that when you are talking about fighting control one knows what you are up against. In Africa we simply do not know how to cope with this problem. Are the mass media to be used to direct the African population? If you are a young country and you have certain objectives in mind, that have to be taken care of pretty quickly, you have to organize people or help them to organize themselves. How do you structure the mass media, because the moment you have a group of people who want to use media in the sense of direction, then you have really the problem of how much other sources of information would be allowed to creep into that kind of program. You might find that if it is directed from the centre, for instance, that it will then become a self-serving kind of structure, that will not allow even the very necessary criticism to take place. Especially in a one-party state in Africa it is very valuable to have not so much political parties which are in opposition, but simply a plurality of sources of criticism etc., that is not eliminated but works within the system itself which can allow for creative discussion. But the moment you don't want to have control from the centre, then you really lay the African society open to foreign influences, usually exploitative ones, such as I have indicated before, so that the dilemma (maybe some of you don't see it as such, but I do), remains. I simply don't know what criteria you could use in Africa for a good structure, i.e. in the terms of mass communication in the society. It is either directed from the Centre, in which case it is capable of stifling any form of criticism, or it allows for the kind of free

criticism or freedom of thought, as one says in Western Europe, which usually implies that the people using the media will manipulate the others without any effective intervention.

The problem of the continuity of the economic system set up by the European powers is just one complicating factor in Africa. It is hardly possible to start planning the future and the use of mass communications in the future without first destroying the existing social, political and economic system which is a hang-over from the colonial days – and let me hasten to add – is still very much alive although some people think of the African continent as now being independent. The colonial situation has simply been replaced by a much more subtle form of imperialism and exploitation through the use of the African elites who are, in many ways, much more incompetent than their former masters.

It is this new ruling African class, for instance, which is permitting Africa to be used as a dumping place not only for such commodities as Coca Cola but for cultural products developed outside of the cultural situation in Africa. For instance, if you go to Nigeria you will find that television there uses an enormous quantity of American material whose application to the African needs is almost nil and whose intellectual value is, to say the very least, limited. These programs include Cowboy films of the cheapest type.

The Americans, of course, do not force African television program planners to buy their material; however, the political, and above all the economic, relationship, is such that African states have become the dumping ground for obsolete material for which no one has any use. The exploitation of the African continent is therefore both automatic as well as systematically planned. In the cultural sphere it is more dangerous than in the economic field because by exploiting the mass media, Western countries can inject their capitalist consumer ideology into masses of Africans in a much more subtle form. In other words, indirectly, through these programs, American capitalists can reach the masses over the heads of their own leaders; the people would therefore be absorbing all the values that African leaders say they are fighting against.

The fundamental need therefore must be to develop African states both ideologically in terms of structures as well as enabling those African states which wish to disengage themselves from 'Big Brother' but lack the economic means to do so by giving them the necessary cooperation in money and skills. It would be better if such cooperation came from neutral countries between the two Big Powers, countries such as Sweden or Finland. Africans themselves must form a cooperative union for devising programs suitable to their own needs. There is, above all, the problem of professional control of the media by those who work in it: that is to say, democratic control.

In Africa it is to be recognized that the mass media can only be integrated within the framework of economic and political development; radio and television, for instance, are of vital importance in terms of security, in terms of teaching and directing the population toward certain political ends; it is therefore a vain hope to assume that any African states would relinquish all control and leave it in the hands of professional people working within the industry. Therefore the mass media tend to be used more or less in a manipulative way. What one has to see is whether within this structure, say in a one-party state, the mass media cannot be used as a direct link between the masses and the bureaucracy at the top, providing channels of criticism as well as information. Though not oppositional the mass media can therefore provide a platform of internal self-criticism to avoid stagnation. On the side of news people should have as free an access to all information as is possible. There are of course certain dangers in this. By the end of this decade, for example, there is likely to be effected the greatest revolution in mass communication. Such a revolution would

mean that people everywhere would have easy access to every bit of information, and you will therefore have something very nearly like an information explosion! What is dangerous in this situation is that people without any ideological guidance may not know how to evaluate such information and how to fit the facts together in such a way that the information forms a coherent picture. This calls for vigilance against cultural imperialism and political brainwashing of the masses by deepening the educational process.

However, we cannot, as in Europe, follow those who are ready to throw up their hands in despair; already mass communication is fulfilling a vital role in African development. Of course mass communication is a dirty word in Europe and America, at least among certain cultured people. It is usually thought of as a problem: the effect it has on the written language and generally on the quality of life. Therefore mass communication in Europe and America is usually linked to something called 'mass culture' or 'mass-cult', a phenomenon thought to be attributes of a highly industrialized society. For us in Africa the need to communicate per se, what means we can use to break Africa's isolation from the world as well as Africans from one another, is still such an overwhelming problem that we would rather think of methods of increasing or deepening the aesthetic worth of the mass media rather than throwing our hands in the air and wishing they were not around. The Third World has already seen the emergence of one country which is harnessing the media to its ideology with some exciting results. This is Cuba.

Cuba is not of course perfect but she is busily making a number of innovations which are interesting. For example, the use of posters as both a vehicle for beautiful abstract designs as well as for instructing the populace in the simple objectives of the Cuban revolution have been remarked upon by a number of visitors as an exciting contribution to pop art because some of the most serious Cuban painters are now working in this medium. What this shows is that instead of feeling dispirited by lack of capitalist patrons, the artist in Cuba, through the very poverty of his society, has been forced to explore new areas of communication.

The same is true of the cinema in Cuba. Because of the American embargo on trade with the island, Cubans have been deprived of importations from Hollywood, a great deal of which was trash; now the Cubans are forced to import only the best from Europe, East and West and what was an American economic weapon has worked to the advantage of that small heroic country. The Cubans have even begun to make their own films, one of which was highly praised in its recent showing in Europe.

What I had intended to point out, at any rate, was the fact that the problem of the deleterious effects of mass media on culture is too academic for us in the Third World. Book learning and the elitist concept of education create the very stratification which the mass media would help to break down. Research done in Africa has shown that peasants who listen to radio know as much about the Vietnam War as most literate viewers and listeners in Europe; a democratic use of radio and television, therefore, would go a long way to de-mystify many aspects of urban culture which African elites are using as a weapon against their own non-literate people in the countryside. To be an intelligent voter would no longer necessarily mean being first able to read and write.

But what is needed primarily is an ideology in Africa. Most Africa politicians profess to be socialists of one sort or another; but any swift glance at the economic and political activities on the continent quickly convinces one that African politicians, with a few honorable exceptions such as Jullus Nyerere, are simply interested in preserving the status quo which was obtained while

Europeans were masters, with only this difference that instead of the exploitative but highly efficient European class you now have an exploitative but highly inefficient African ruling class.

This is a pity because Africa has the real chance of using the mass media in such a way that non-literate peasants can leap from their traditional societies straight into the age of electronics; they can be linked directly to a technological society via the mass media; they can be educated and brought into contact with many cultural artefacts of developed societies. Their level of expectations can be raised so that they would be less satisfied with what they have and demand more of what they don't have. Above all, even at the risk of becoming poorer for the time being, African states could break their absolute dependence on Europe and America for mass produced foreign products which have no particular relevance to African needs.

The bulk of programs put on African television, for example, are products of American television, some of which are over ten years old, but which are made available to Africans on a very cheap basis. These programs include very bad Westerns and other forms of American escapism. As far as Radio is concerned, there is now a considerable competition for the African listener on the African airwaves, but what is lacking is any clear ideological content. There is the United States Information Agency's Voice of America broadcasting from Liberia; there is the Voice of Germany broadcasting from Ruanda, there is the British Information Service and the B.B.C.; and to make the scene even more bizarre there is the Radio Voice of the Gospel run by the Lutheran World Federation Broadcasting Service, transmitting on a formidable schedule in 15 different languages around the clock. There are the French, Arab, the Soviet and other radio transmissions. This is a new Tower of Babel. Some form of a cooperative agency is obviously vitally needed here.

Let me end this paper by pointing out once again that Africa, as well as other parts of the Third World, provide a good laboratory for testing out certain assumptions, theories or hypotheses about audio-visual methods of communication. This is so because Africa is in a transitional stage in which the new structures and institutions have not yet hardened beyond hope of change. In the educational sphere we can test the theory as to whether we can in fact instruct people who have no book learning through audio-visual methods. Perhaps the possibility is that you can disseminate simple information, and stimulate people afterwards to learn to read and grapple with more complex forms of ideas and thought. In any case, Africa presents a challenge. Dare we accept it?

DISCUSSION

(Chairman: Dr. Nordenstreng)

Mr. E.S. REPO:

His presentation was divided into three parts: firstly the international organizations, then their joint work, and finally satellites.

International organizations in the broadcasting field, the original being the International Radio Union (UIR) was founded 45 years ago. This was split during the Cold War at the end of the 40's and two organizations were formed in Europe: 1) EBU was founded in 1950 and its active members consist mainly of Western European countries and some underdeveloped countries in Northern

Africa. In addition there are a large group of associated broadcasting organizations from Africa, Asia, the United States and even some from Latin America. 2) OIRT, the International Radio and Television Organization (of which he presently is President), founded as OIR in 1946 and in its present form in 1949, is open to all states in principle, but the members are mainly from socialist countries. The number of members is less than EBU's, but the possible viewer and listening audience would be twice as large, if China would take an active part; however, it does not at present for political reasons. The third large union is the Asian Broadcasting Union, ABU, whose membership consists of the non-communist countries in Asia. The main office is in Japan which also leads the functioning of the union. It is a very loose organization politically, including such countries as Formosa, China, City of Hong Kong, All-India Radio and Television, and various Pacific Islands, South Viet Nam, South Korea, Malaysia, etc. It seeks cooperation with EBU and also with OIRT, but there are many large political obstacles to this. The youngest broadcasting union is the Arab States Broadcasting Union, which has close relations with the Arab League. The Arabian union has the advantage of having a universal language, Arabic. This provides them with strong possibility to cooperate. The union has only been functioning a short time, it recently had its second general assembly meeting, and it seems that there are very great possibilities for it to start functioning as a union. The Asian Broadcasting Union, as well as the African Organization (URTNA) are weak in his opinion, due mainly to their language difficulties. The Latin American Broadcasting Association is mainly a union of commercial broadcasters in Latin America, and as far as he knew the advertising prices were the greatest problems during their meetings. They have been present at an international conference which Unesco convened in 1968 when all broadcasting unions were invited to discuss satellite questions.

At present, cooperation is increasing between the other unions and OIRT. OIRT has an agreement to cooperate with EBU, the African Broadcasting Union URTNA and the Arab States Broadcasting Union. The only union with which OIRT has no official agreement is the Asian Broadcasting Union, but discussion has been held to this effect, even though it is politically a difficult question. The aim is to form some kind of organization so that the activities of the various broadcasting unions would be globally coordinated. A typical example of the situation today is that in Mexico in a year's time there will be an educational conference, which does not interest Europe very much, because, apart from Spain, Portugal and Italy, there are few alphabets in Europe. But for all the other countries the most pressing issues concern the literacy and school education through broadcasting. Such a conference interests URTNA, ASBU and ABU, but no EBU. On the other hand there are a large group of joint interests, e.g. program exchange, tariffs for program transmission, program production and exchange of experience. All these are joint undertakings which basically could be under such a common organization. It is naturally only as a result of difficult and hard work that such an organization can be formed but such a basic wish exists in all the parts of the world that he had been, possibly with the exception of the United States, where the function of broadcasting is very strongly commercial.

A few words on the satellite question. The Intelsat system is under development which is administered by the Americans and the decisions are made by Comsat which is an American company. At the moment negotiations are going on to establish permanent agreements for this system. The idea of the system is to develop one world-wide satellite network or system.

The difficulty is one of decision making, if it is not already there. At the moment Comsat dictates what happens in this system, or rather the United States. Intelsat functions on a commercial basis; the tariffs have somewhat decreased during the last few years, but at the same time they are still high in the opinion of the broadcasting unions. Intelsat tries to become a world-wide union, and its members may not become members of any other organization. These conditions are not yet agreed to. At the moment there is a second system under development by another super power, the Soviet Union. This is not as far advanced as the Intelsat system, which has satellites above the Atlantic, the Pacific and the Indian Ocean; the Soviets intend, however, to put up a synchronous satellite south of Ceylon, then there would be two competitive satellites above the Indian ocean. The Soviets have also developed a nonsynchronous system, where the satellites do not remain in the same place in relation to earth, but are available for use only at certain periods, the Orbita system. This is in working condition, and had experimental transmissions as far as France. He had recently discussed satellite questions with the Russian satellite Minister who had said that Russia is just stepping into the international arena but up to now the satellite system was only intended for domestic use; presumably USSR now will try for direct competition with Intelsat. The formation of another satellite system would become a lot cheaper than Intelsat is at present.

Mr. ROTKIRCH:

He wanted to add one thing on the need for a common global broadcasting union: it has been found that when speaking of communication satellites one needs some kind of organization which speaks for all broadcasters. The UN Outer Space Committee last year set up a Working Party on Broadcasting satellites, e.g. those transmitting directly to receivers without the use of a ground station, and this Working Group has put a lot of attention on the broadcasting unions, and the need for their opinions. The UN has the International Telecommunications Union, but there is no connection with the broadcasting unions and the UN, and if the UN wishes to make comments in these matters it must turn to each individual union without any coordination. This lack of agreement in the field of broadcasting is detrimental; because the regional broadcasting unions cannot agree on matters between themselves, someone else comes in between them, and their views are not brought to light.

He then spoke about the satellite organization:

The only working world-wide satellite organization at present in civil use (there being also military satellite systems) is Intelsat. About 70 countries have joined this organization since its founding in 1964, and it at present has satellites over the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans, synchronized to cover the majority of the globe. Agreements on Intelsat's behalf are made by Comsat, an American shareholding company in which American common carriers own half, and the general public the other half. These two partner halves each elect three members of the Board of Governors and the President of the United States appoints another three. In fact, the common carriers decide Comsat's affairs and through this Intelsat's affairs, due to their strong position in Comsat. Comsat does not only look after the Intelsat business, it is also the USA's official representative in the Intelsat, and in the interim agreement the US voting power cannot hold less than 50,6 % of the voting power. Socialist countries do not belong to this organization, Yugoslavia being the only exception (it has only recently joined). The agreements of Intelsat made in 1964 were provisional, and the idea was to form permanent agreements before the year 1970. These negotiations are still open, however, but one can say that they have progressed so far that the United States has agreed to reduce their voting power to 40 %, and there is hope of it becoming more democratic so that other countries have more to say in the future organization of Intelsat. It has also been proposed that the management of Intelsat shall be handled by an international body in 6 years time.

Also in civil use apart from Intelsat there is another satellite system in the USSR called Orbita. In the Intelsat System, transmissions are made from ground stations with the satellite to another ground station which forwards the signals using the terrestrial network to the receivers. The Intelsat stations work as both transmitters and receivers. The Orbita system works in such a way that transmissions are made from Moscow to the satellite, and therefrom it is divided into over 20 ground stations which are purely receivers in different parts of the Soviet Union. These then forward the signal to the area receivers. In this way the Moscow television program can be transmitted throughout the whole country, which would otherwise be impossible as there is no terrestrial network for such transmissions. Last autumn Mongolia joined the ORBITA system. There are plans to construct ground stations in other Eastern European countries for this system. A ground station is also under construction in Cuba.

A second system is being developed in the Soviet Union called Stationara which would be a synchronized satellite, designed at present only for the Indian Ocean and not for world-wide transmission.

Two regional satellite systems being planned in Europe; the English/French Symphonie, and the Western European State joint project. They are planned for use in 1975, and will then be able to transmit television and telephone traffic.

The Arabian countries plan their own television satellite for Arabian countries, and there are also plans for area satellites for the Spanish language Latin American countries. These would be more or less for educational purposes. This has been investigated with the aid of Unesco.

National plans are quite well advanced in various countries: India has the first which will appear in 1971, to use their own satellite which will mainly be for educational programs, and will be capable of reaching all 500.000 Indian villages when they have receivers. This is interesting in that it will be the first developing country which has no ground network of its own and the construction of such would involve a great deal of time and expense. The satellite will substitute for this entire network. - Canada will have their own satellite in 1971/72. - Brasil plans their own system with the aid of Unesco as well as Indonesia for their many islands. - The USA has many plans for satellites, but the ground network is such that it makes the problems somewhat different. - The USA has also an experimental satellite system called ATS. This was used during the Mexico Olympics when the Intelsat satellite broke down.

Military satellites will come into civil use soon. Much expense has been poured into them and there are at present at least 2 different satellite organizations, the one under the control of the Navy and the other under the Air Force. NATO has its own system of 12 satellites. One of the USA military satellite systems is now using strong satellites that are planned for Intelsat only in 1974. This is called TACSATCOM, and has been developed to such an extent that signals can be given and orders directly from the satellite to soldiers from airplanes, the receiving antenna is so small that it can be carried on a soldier's back.

Plans are under way for USA and Latin American countries for Cavisat, linking up Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Venezuela, and Bolivia with universities in the United States. It has been developed to such an extent that it is planned to have connections with the American and Latin American schools. It is planned to have a computer in the future to check examination results and educational programs would be produced also in the USA. This system is being developed by three companies, Comsat,

Hughes Aircraft Corp., and General Electric. This has apparently caused a sense of alarm among the Ministers of Education in these countries.

The Unesco conference in Paris last December discussed the future of satellite educational programs and their problems, proposals were made especially those of the Latin American countries, by India and some African countries that some kind of international agreement must be made to prevent smaller countries from receiving programs they do not wish and that Unesco should undertake a study of the problem.

Professor SMYTHE:

My interest in this began in 1959; since then Ploman, d'Arcy and I have been in pretty constant communication with each other about the developments. I would just like to say that the present predicament in relation to organization and policy for satellites could have been avoided. The satellites became to some extent a cold war instrumentality and, as an American recently put it, they grabbed the technology which they saw available and kept it out of the UN and associated organizations as much as they could. At the time Comsat was organized by an Act of Congress. I was at that time an American and I testified against the Bill in both the House and the Senate Committees. There was an alternative which we were proposing at that time that you should at least know existed. We proposed that the satellite should be innovated temporarily under a Government organization, NASA, or some other and that after they had been proven, some of us proposed that they should be turned over to a United Nations agency, and I may say that the president of the Philco Corp. said this publically, too. But there was an extensive debate in the Senate which went on a week on this issue in 1962.

As I see it, an important question is the one raised by the chairman of the program controls in relation to satellite broadcasting. Obviously this is a question which people are just beginning to become aware of. The proposal as made by me with the aid of Ploman that the satellite organization should be on a world scale, a federation of regional broadcasting unions, and programming should be conducted by the professional broadcasting organizations through the Union. We proposed that the programming policy should be by mutual consent of the participating nations, and that it should proceed from the least controversial to the more controversial. As mutual agreements should be worked out for it. I think this still remains as one possible approach.

The thinking as I understand it around North America is very undeveloped on this question. I have heard responsible and highly-placed Americans suggest that there is no problem here at all, that broadcasting by satellite will be a regional perhaps a national enterprise, and the only problem would involve spill-over of a signal in border areas.

At a recent meeting again in the USA I heard the same person talking in terms of the necessity of an international understanding on the program policy. He felt that jamming was not an adequate solution to unwanted programs; he suggested that prior consent could be obtained from the people who would receive the programs before they were put up. There is some movement in the development of thinking about this in the USA.

I would also like to comment about the larger and long-run significance of the satellite in relation to our human organization on this earth. As one looks at the history of man's technology, one can see today that as a result of the new industrial revolution beginning about 100 years ago, that not only in the field of communications but in the field of military applications and public health, we have a

technology which extends on a supernational level beyond the effective authority of the nation-state. The communication satellites are a beautiful example of this. The problem which they post is in principle insoluble. It is a dilemma which does not seem to give any obvious solution. Communications policy for the nation-state is possibly as essential to its sovereignty and integrity as the military which it has, and yet communication satellite technology forces the nation-state to divest itself of some measure of national control over the operation of the instruments of communication. This is a great bind. If you are a nation-state and want to continue to live in a world in which nation-states are the building blocks in which the society is organized. The tendency seems to be towards functional regional and world operations of the technology, not only in communications but in the area of health, through WHO, and of course the kind of uneasy international minuet which is performed around nuclear weaponry and similar technology, has the same general effect. On the military side the technology we now have makes war no longer a viable instrument of national policy, because if you use the weapon you have lost everything, and it is not longer an adequate defence.

My hypothesis is that technology, by transcending the nation-state, is moving us perhaps beyond the danger point of destruction, and that the communications satellites are terribly important as they develop regional and world consensus or public opinion. In this context I would like to raise the question of the role of communication satellites in facilitating or forcing the nation to agree to some kind of international news-gathering and news-dispensing organization as has been proposed by the study done for Unesco about 15 years ago. Even on the basis of an international news secretariat or on the basis of a cooperative in which the working journalists were the people who owned the cooperative. With communication satellites coming along this way how can the world afford to continue with the totally inadequate world wire services, all of which today are national in their origin and their biases.

If you look at the map of how African countries have to communicate with each other by telephone, you will find the wires running under the water to London or the Paris and then back again to Africa. With a point-to-point continental service in Africa the countries could have the control of the appropriate technology of talking to themselves, and this would be of value for the development of an autonomous identity for the nation states in Africa to have this.

In Europe does the problem of the parking slot or the orbital location of frequency assignment bring together nations to consider the uses of the satellites and perhaps indirectly bring together the broadcasting organizations? In the Western world this acts as a force which should lead to hemispheric consultations as to the plans of the various nations with respect to putting up regional or national satellites, for either point-to-point or broadcast uses. Some in the West, mainly Americans, feel they can do it alone, and the latecomers will have to accept the orbital slots remaining. I feel there should be prior consultation at the diplomatic level before the meeting of ITU in 1971. Much more than just the slots is involved (all technicalities, etc.).

Mr. E.S. REPO:

This does not belong to broadcasting organizations, but the post and telegraphs administrations, and on a governmental level.

Mr. ROTKIRCH:

In Europe the question is for the telecommunication administration, but we are not unaware of the problems in broadcasting. This problem has tried to be brought to the administration to get some agreements, but so far it is our administration which has been slow to grasp this.

Mr. KALLIO:

The problem of program control. I have heard several times words about a world-wide service and wonder if Professor Smythe could give us some more information about how it would be possible to make this kind of system, taking into account your statement of the dangers to a nation-state and also considering how difficult it is for the UN today to decide on such matters.

Professor SMYTHE:

I agree with the size of the problem, but have no easy answer. It involves many problematic areas. Not only that of what is acceptable programing, but copyright, etc., all of which bring forward new international legal problems. We are very far from having identified the position of the problems, much less the solution. All this seems to illustrate the fact that the engineers have run away with things, technology has been developed beyond the programing.

Mr. KALLIO:

Is the idea to have an organization which is global on the first level, with the national level providing news and entertainment for national consumption and this world-wide service concerning political issues from the UN and, further, would it be in the power of individual countries either to accept or ignore it?

Professor SMYTHE:

When one first hears about the technology the tendency is to assume that the problem is global in scope. But I think this is magnifying the problem beyond the realistic time dimension. I think the problems will occur nationally and regionally first, and then become global when the regional blocks are added together. If one stops to think about the global broadcasting problem there are a number of considerations that support this cautious view. One is that at any given hour a third of the world's population is probably asleep. A second is that there are very few subjects at present in which the whole world would want to simultaneously to be exposed to a broadcast. Then there is the whole logistical difficulty of mounting it, so that I think we should deal with the regional and national problems first.

Mrs. HAUSEN:

Professor Smythe stated that technology has outrun us, and we don't know what to say when we have the technical possibilities. But shouldn't we instead go the opposite way -- not try to build out the future and our behavior from the present situation, but try to get a picture of the future in a more total way, thinking about world planning on a wider scale, i.e. also try to think about global norms and behavior, also to define our problems at least negatively, and also to go in for a system which controls the worst dangers. Then one could develop the broadcasting system more rationally, more precisely.

Professor SMYTHE:

I am happy to hear you say that, because very few people have this point of view. I agree with you.

CHAIRMAN: This seems to be an ideal solution, but how could it be organized?

Mrs. HAUSEN:

You might say that this is ideal but not practical or realistic. Anyway people are beginning to think in this way, both in the USA and the Soviet Union and also in Europe. This means that if it is not

faced in time, they will think ahead of you, and also act ahead of you very quickly. This really means that if there is developing a system build up by the super forces then the Third World has little to say any more; it is too late. Therefore for instance Unesco activities in the field of education and communication, should be watched very closely.

Professor SMYTHE:

I agree with you completely. You just reminded me of one comment I made yesterday that I would like to make again. There has been very fruitful cooperation between Sweden and Canada with regard to direct satellite broadcasting in the UN, and Yugoslavia has participated similar initiatives within Unesco with Canada and Sweden. Coming from a small country in the shadow of a super power, I am inclined to paraphrase Marx and suggest that all nations of the world should unite -- they have nothing to loose but their chains. In this area it is very urgent to collaborate.

Mr. VAKKILAINEN:

I would like to draw attention to technical and other social development which appear in other areas. Could not this global organization only work together with the development, stepwise in different fields.

Professor SMYTHE:

Yes and no. This is a truism, but if you allow the power struggle to settle this question without utilizing whatever organs for international legislation, you may not like the results very well.

Mr. VAKKILAINEN:

Then we may develop an ideal, but will it work?

Professor SMYTHE:

What is called for is a new and flexible kind of political tactic which employs the contradictions in the situation to the advantage of the world interest as against private interest. There are a lot of these contradictory elements which are blocking people who would like to do things.

CHAIRMAN summarized two central themes in the discussion:

- 1) technology of the satellite age which implied as a necessary complement development towards regionalization, towards larger blocks than single nations within the field of broadcasting. This regionalization does not mean a world or globalization.
- 2) the relationship to organizational arrangements with which the satellites and other technological equipment are used. Here we face the political realities and social development, economical and political development in each region. At this organizational level we also face the clue of the whole game, i.e. the goal of broadcasting and the potential conflict between different interest groups -- the information conveyor on the one hand, and the surrounding state and other interests on the other.

The Chairman asked Mr. Repo to read his comment on the goals of broadcasting systems around the world, which would be an appropriate end of the day's meeting.

Mr. E.S. REPO:

I have, to some extent, got acquainted with various broadcasting activities in Europe, Asia, the U.S.A., Africa. I believe I also know something about the broadcasting activities in Australia. The most vague idea I have is that of South America, where the organization also may be more complicated. In South America broadcasting is directed by the state, the army, the U.S.A., the

commercial enterprises, the party - in other words the general picture is rather multiplex. From a global point of view it looks at present as though the broadcasting activities in most parts of the world are experienced as a media of direction and not as a communication media, in other words not as a media serving the public and its needs but directing the public. Only very few countries make an exception, so few that I cannot even mention examples of them.

I consider the basic problem of these broadcasting activities as follows: is radio and television a media of direction or a free communication media? In most parts of the world broadcasting is regarded and accepted as a direction media. I would compare its structure to what the Catholic Church meant in the Middle Ages. It had in its possession the Knowledge and naturally also the power and the means by which this power was realized: the priests, the churches and the stakes.

All over the world the political importance of broadcasting has increased and all over the world those who make the decisions in politics take a growing interest in broadcasting activities. We are slowly realizing the threat of an ecocatastrophe caused by pollution and we start trying to prevent it. But in my opinion there is as big a threat in the fact that the communication media is becoming a direction media, especially as regards electrical equipment. In the years' time we shall be in the age of satellites. If we do not see to it that the freedom of expression is preserved, it might happen that in ten years' time the broadcasting activities are no longer a communication media, but merely a media of direction and manipulation.

COGNITION AND ITS MANIPULATION

by

Yrjö Ahmavaara

Cognition and learning

The material event in the central nervous system which is experienced by a human being as the birth of a thought in the consciousness will be called cognition in the following. Cognition of a thought thus is a momentary event which happens at the very instant when the thought in question originates in the consciousness of a human being.

Cognition of a certain thought may be preceded by a temporally prolonged nervous process which lays the foundation for cognition. This nervous process will here be called the process of learning.

Learning by conditioning

An individual may learn information in two ways, different in principle, to which there correspond two different types of the process of learning. These two processes of learning differ from one another in a fundamental way, in the sense that they are based on two basically different cybernetic principles: self-regulation and self-steering.

The first of these two types of learning is learning by conditioning or, what is the same, learning by means of reward or punishment. One learns information, for instance, by trying to get a reward different from the information itself. An example of this kind of reward, external to the process of learning, is the food which is used as a reward in learning experiments performed on animals. The examinations and degrees which are competed for in schools are also examples of this kind of external reward, as are also the occupations which are the final goals of vocational schooling.

In addition to striving for an external reward, learning by conditioning also appears in another form, i.e. that of learning through trying to avoid some punishment. An example of learning through conditioning of this particular kind is that conditioned by an electric shock, often used in learning experiments on animals. The experimental animal learns a new reaction in order to avoid an electric shock. In school, as we all know, punishments are also used to direct learning to some desired end: for instance, a student may be taught "good behavior" by threatening him with a sanction.

In cybernetic terms, learning by conditioning is a process of regulation which is directed from outside the system. The popular expression "brain-washing" is best applicable precisely to learning by conditioning. The term "manipulation", often used lately in speaking of the learning of information, also refers to learning by conditioning.

The drawback to learning by conditioning (or to learning by means of rewards and punishments, to brain washing or to manipulation) is the fact that it puts the teacher and the student (the manipulator

1 The problems dealt with in this and the following paper have been considered more systematically in the author's book Information (in Finnish). Weilin-Göös, Helsinki 1969.

and the manipulated) into unequal positions as far as the right to self-regulation or self-control is concerned. The manipulator exploits one of the fundamental rights, i.e. that of self-control, in such a way that he determines the direction in which cognition in the manipulated person develops. He determines toward what objects, thoughts and knowledge the cognition of the manipulated individual is directed. This may furthermore have social consequences, leading in turn to other kinds of exploitation of the manipulated persons in favor of the manipulators. Thus learning by conditioning is not consistent with the democratic principles which are the goal of mutual intercourse between human beings.

However, learning by conditioning is not even congruent with the best pedagogical and psychological principles of learning. Learning in human beings occurs better and more naturally in the form of so-called spontaneous learning.

Spontaneous learning

Learning is spontaneous if the reward of learning is the learned knowledge itself, together with the intellectual entertainment involved in the learning process. The word "spontaneous" refers to the fact that there is no external reward or punishment in this kind of learning but that instead the learning is based on the structural conditions of the learner himself. We can also speak in this connection of learning by "insight", and we can consider this kind of learning to be motivated by "intellectual curiosity".

Whatever expression we use to describe this kind of learning, we are justified in claiming that spontaneous learning is a basic characteristic of all living beings with consciousness, and that this kind of learning process is continuous throughout the waking hours of the organism (the process is interrupted only by sleep). It has been possible to demonstrate spontaneous learning even in experiments on animals. We can refer here, for instance, to the experiments on so-called latent learning. In these experiments the animals learned the structure of a labyrinth without any use of external reward or punishment.

On the basis of cybernetic theory we can consider spontaneous learning as the fundamental and most important feature of high-level self-steering systems. Spontaneousness does not mean lack of goals in learning, which is a common misunderstanding; it means only that the learning system itself performs selection of its goals during the learning process. Such a self-steering organism is a cybernetic system for which certain compensatory types of feedback couplings are typical (see Oskar Lange, *Wholes and Parts*, Pergamon Press 1965). Under the direction of its own coupling structure this kind of system develops, starting with some external stimulus, a self-steering process which is spontaneous in the sense that the goal of the process (the so-called direction function) is, within the domain of ergodicity, independent of the original stimulus. By changing the external stimulus within the domain of ergodicity we get different processes of self-steering, which, however, approach the same direction function as their final goal.

The behavioristic tradition in psychology has, as a consequence of the theories of conditioned learning so popular lately (Suppes, Estes and other), tended to view all kinds of learning from the point of view of conditioned learning. For this reason psychologists have tended to develop even the methods of teaching employed in schools on the basis of conditioned learning (e.g. the teaching experiments of Patrick Suppes at Stanford University).

The significance of conditioned learning is greatest in the learning of instrumental reactions and of other forms of behavior closely connected with the reflex background of human behavior,¹ but it diminished the more the higher intellectual activities are in question. The learning of one's native language almost certainly happens by means of spontaneous learning. It is no wonder, then, that criticism directed against theories of conditioned learning as a universal explanation of human learning started as criticism of the theory of conditioned language learning. This criticism was initiated by the well-known linguist Noam Chomsky in his comments on Skinner's book on verbal behavior.² We can add that a similar criticism could be based on cybernetic theory as a theoretical scheme emphasizing the significance of self-steering for high-level cybernetic systems.

Social process of cognition the mechanisms of manipulation

The social process of cognition can be defined as the total process composed of the learning processes in the individuals belonging to the society in question, and of the mutual interactions of these individual processes. It follows from the definition that the social process of cognition is partly manipulated, and partly spontaneous.

The mechanisms of manipulation which are active in the social process of cognition are the means by which the existing social system regulates and directs the cognitive processes of the individuals who live within this social system. This regulation is realized, of course, by means of certain rewards or punishments. Depending on whether the direction of cognitive process is realized by means of a reward or a punishment, we have two fundamental types of the social mechanisms of manipulation:

- (1) manipulation by means of social rewards, such as jobs, titles, degrees, social prestige etc., and
- (2) manipulation by means of social sanctions, in which we may include - in addition to the sanctions that follow from criminal or deviating behavior - also all uses of power which may imply some form of exploitation.

Since the distribution of rewards and sanctions in society depends, in the last analysis, on the fundamental economic system of the society, it is this economic system which in the long run directs the general tendency of the social process of cognition.

It follows that there is some manipulation of the social process of cognition in every social system in which some acts by individuals are either rewarded or punished. This definition evidently includes all social systems which have so far existed. However, manipulation is particularly strong, on the one hand in typical competitive societies, where the work input of the individual is closely bound up with his livelihood, and on the other hand in authoritarian class societies, in which both economical and other sanctions in excess are brought to bear upon the individual.

It follows from the fact of social manipulation of the cognitive process that in every social system where mechanisms of manipulation exist the cognition of certain specific ideas is easier than the

1 I have considered the behavioral mechanisms in which conditioning plays an important role in my book Causal Explanation of Reactive Behavior, Houghton-Mifflin (in press).

2 See Noam Chomsky, *Language* 35, No. 1, 25-58, 1959.

cognition of other ideas. The former kind of ideas, whose cognition is easy, form together the prevalent way of thinking or the intellectual hegemony in the society. Thus the existence of an intellectual hegemony in a society is a consequence of the functioning of the social mechanisms of manipulation. As soon as we can speak of specific mechanisms of manipulation following from a specific economic system, we can also speak of a specific intellectual hegemony or a particular way of thinking, which these mechanisms tend to induce in the people living in this society.

Social process of cognition: spontaneous, critical cognition

In spite of the mechanisms of manipulation an individual may also cognize ideas which deviate from the prevalent accepted ideas of the society. This is made difficult by the mechanisms of manipulation. However, it is possible, since it is characteristic of human beings to learn new things spontaneously as long as he is awake. Thus the cognition of new ideas may occur even if these ideas are not consistent with the intellectual hegemony prevalent in the society. We may call this kind of cognition critical cognition, since it involves the cognition of ideas inconsistent with the prevalent way of thinking.

Spontaneous, critical cognition or, what is the same, the cognition of new ideas inconsistent with the intellectual hegemony often begins within a minority group in the society. This kind of minority may be called the foregroup of cognition (of the particular idea in question).

Gradually, the cognition of a new idea spreads to a larger and larger group, until this idea may eventually become a power which changes the prevalent intellectual hegemony and the prevalent social order. Then the new idea becomes part of a new intellectual hegemony, which is further developed by new foregroups with new ideas. This kind of process has been characteristic of the cognition of new ideas in science and in the growth of social ideologies.

Foregroups of cognition

It is evident that there are some social groups which are more likely to function as foregroups of cognition than are other parts of society. We can consider two conditions to be necessary for critical cognition:

- (1) the individual must be in conflict with the prevalent social system and with the prevalent intellectual hegemony, and
- (2) he must have a sufficient intellectual capacity for the analysis of this conflict.

From these conditions it follows that the social groups in which foregroups of cognition are likely to appear in modern industrial society are

- the proletariat or people who are economically exploited within the existing social system (whether industrial or agrarian proletariat),
- deviating individuals, whose normal behavior differs from that prescribed by the prevalent social norms, and
- students and intellectuals, to whom the society usually offers better possibilities than to other people for spontaneous, critical analysis.

The service function and the autonomic function

I shall now consider the social institutions of cognition, by which I mean the schools, the universities and the institutions for mass communication. I shall speak only of those institutions of cognition which are owned by society, and for which society can thus set the goals.

The most important distinction which can be made among the institutions of cognition is the distinction between institutions whose main function is to perform a specific service, on the one hand, and institutions which have an autonomic function, on the other.

Every social institution which is necessary in society of course serves the whole society in some way. By specific service I mean here only those services which are performed for a limited organization or interest group within the society (e.g., the state, a particular circle of customers, industries etc.) but which does not comprise the society as a whole.

The autonomic function of an institution of cognition is always a relative one. The institution is the more autonomous, the greater the extent to which this institution is able to define its goals itself. Of course, every institution of cognition which is owned by society must have a controlling organ which represents the interests of the total society. However, the control of the institution may be stronger or weaker: the weaker it is, the more autonomous the institution in question.

The distinction between the functions of the institutions of cognition which was made above is fundamental in the sense that it determines the fundamental nature of the cognition that occurs within the institution. The functioning of an institution which is concentrated on specific service is, cybernetically, a process of regulation directed from outside. Thus the processes of cognition happening in these kinds of institutions are manipulated. The more autonomous the functioning of an institution, the greater the extent to which this functioning may be self-steering, and the greater the possibilities for spontaneous, critical cognition.

The service function and the autonomy of schools and universities

Traditionally only the universities have been allowed a relative autonomy in our society. The function of the other schools has been defined from the point of view of service, which has been partly general service, partly specific service by nature. The schools must supply the society with the people who are able to keep the wheels turning; earlier this attitude involved going to school in order to enter the service of society in government or security functions, now it means going to school in order to enter productive life. The idea according to which the main function of the schools and the universities is specific service can be called the technocratic conception of education. Even the functions of mass communication have sometimes been considered from the point of view of the technocratic conception.

If the functions of the institutions of cognition are considered from the point of view of specific service, there is the evident danger that spontaneous, critical cognition is made difficult in society. On the other hand, we cannot ignore the specific services that are necessary for society. However, it can with good reason be claimed that with the progress of productive technology the relative share of specific service in education can be restricted and better possibilities thus created for spontaneous, critical cognition in educational institutions.

The gradual reduction of the share of special service in education makes it possible to diminish, gradually, the share of examination oriented study in schools and universities, and to orient these institutions toward a study community type of learning. To emphasize the autonomic function and to facilitate spontaneous, critical cognition it is also necessary for schools and universities to develop into open institutions, cultural centers, into which people from different social circles have free entrance. This is necessary in order to get foregroups of cognition from different social groups into these educational institutions.

The autonomic function of mass communication

The media of mass communication, such as radio and television, do not primarily perform any specific services necessary for production and livelihood (even the transmission of news is a general service serving the whole population). Accordingly, their natural function is an autonomous one, in the relative sense considered above. It follows that radio and television should depend as little as possible on any other organization or pressure group in society. Radio and television should not be, for instance, controlled by commercial interests. However, even the control exerted by the state should be as limited as possible. A strong control over radio and television by the state reduces the autonomy of this medium, and diminishes its possibilities of advancing spontaneous, critical cognition in society. This in turn is a necessary (even though not sufficient) condition for the expansion of democracy in society. A strengthened control on the part of the state can be justified only in order to reduce some other, more dangerous kind of control.

THE PROCESS OF MASS COMMUNICATION

by

Yrjö Ahmavaara

On the definition of mass communication

A medium of mass communication is distinguished from the other communication media first of all by the fact that it does not set up personal contact between the sender and the receiver of the message but speaks impersonally to a "mass" audience, the "public", to which the messages are addressed. This distinguishes the media of mass communication for instance from the telephone.

Moreover, the more typical a medium is of the mass communication media, the less pre-selected is the public of each message. The public of the newspaper of a political party is more clearly pre-selected than, say, the public of a normal radio or television broadcast. Thus radio and especially television are more typical of the mass communication media than are the newspapers.

Another medium more typical than the newspaper is the movie, which in its character as a medium of mass communication lies somewhere between newspaper and radio. The so-called ether media, i.e. radio and television, are thus the most typical media of mass communication in our time. Then comes the film, and after that the newspaper.

Literature, in particular the kind of literature which is intended to speak to a large audience on social problems, has some of the characteristics of mass communication. However, literature at its most typical clearly differs from mass communication. A reader reads a book as an individual and the act of reading involves a mental discussion with the author. Thus the event of reading can be said to set up a personal mental contact between the reader and the author. No other persons than these two, the reader and the author, are involved in the mental situation of reading a book.

A book is not even written for a "public" but for an individual, although an individual not selected beforehand. The unselectedness of the receivers of the messages communicated in literature recalls of course the unselectedness of the mass communication audience. This is a characteristic common to both literature and mass communication. However, a book is addressed to an individual (to any individual who will read the book), and aims at a personal contact between the reader and the author. This distinguishes typical literature from a typical medium of mass communication.

The main types of mass communication

It is evident that the social function of a mass communication medium can be more distinctly defined than the social function of literature. I mean that it is possible and reasonable to formulate and realize exactly defined general goals for the content as well as for the organization of mass communication. With respect to literature, on the other hand, it is not possible to formulate any realizable goals as far as the content is concerned. This is shown clearly enough by the many unsuccessful attempts that have been made to control the content of literature, for instance to make it conform to the desires of church, or ruler, or state. Only the organization of literature, by which I mean the organization of book printing, of the economic position of authors, and of book distribution, can be planned and formulated in terms of exactly defined goals.

In the formulation of goals for the content of mass communication we can first distinguish between three main categories. Thus we can speak of

- informational mass communication,
- commercial mass communication, and
- ideological mass communication.

Informational mass communication tends to maximize the amount of information contained in its messages. This means that informational mass communication offers to its public as the largest possible number of messages which are as significant as possible and which are new in the sense that the factual content of these messages is not known to the public beforehand. What is essential is that the facts involved in the message are new to the public; only new facts contain information, in the sense in which information is precisely defined in the logical theory of semantic information (see, e.g. Ahmavaara, Informaatio, Helsinki 1969 (in Finnish) and Bar-Hillel, Language and information, London 1964). Thus speaking of the information contained in a message presupposes knowledge of the earlier information which the receiver of the messages already has. In the case of mass communication this means that we must be able to estimate the average knowledge, and the way of thinking based upon it, which the unselected public of this medium already possesses. Only messages which add something to this average knowledge contain information as far as mass communication is concerned.

Commercial mass communication is based on the sale of messages. It follows that the content of commercial mass communication is determined by the things which the public already knows how to

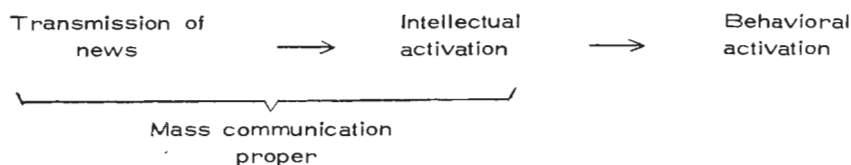
want (and is often manipulated to want). For this reason commercial mass communication tends to minimize the information content of its messages: it tends to tell its public what the latter already more or less knows. Accordingly, commercial mass communication is the logical opposite of informational mass communication. Examples of commercial mass communication in our society are commercial television and commercial weekly magazines.

We can call confessional the type of mass communication in which only messages which are consistent with a particular political or religious ideology are allowed. Closest to ideological mass communication in our society is probably the political and the religious press and, in general, the publications distributed by any ideological organization. The stricter the censorship this kind of publication exercises in the selection of news and other messages according to an ideological point of view, the more ideological is the mass communication in question.

The following discussion is restricted to the informational type of mass communication.

The functions of informational mass communication

Informational mass communication can be considered a three-step process:



Transmission of news means here the transmission of "raw" news material as such, without any commentary or any kind of background. The mere transmission of news thus does not build any intellectual wholes out of the messages it offers. It does not provide any systematic background to the news.

By Intellectual activation is here meant the construction of intellectual wholes out of information. The purpose of these intellectual wholes is to provide a systematic background for the comprehension of the world, including a systematic background for the news. While the transmission of raw news only gives facts about various recent events, intellectual activation also provides ideas and concepts enabling the listener to comprehend the facts. We will soon come to the distinction between news transmission and intellectual activation in greater detail.

Behavioral activation must of course be distinguished from intellectual activation. Mere thought does not always lead to action. To comprehend something is not the same as to act according to the comprehended idea. Whether or not individual persons or groups of individuals are stimulated to action by the information given in mass communication depends on other factors too, and not only on the content of mass communication. Action often presupposes personal contact between individuals; this can be achieved for instance, within some organization. Thus a medium of mass communication is not sufficient in itself to stimulate people to social action, although informational mass communication may be a necessary condition for the growth of social action in our time, in some area of social activity at least.

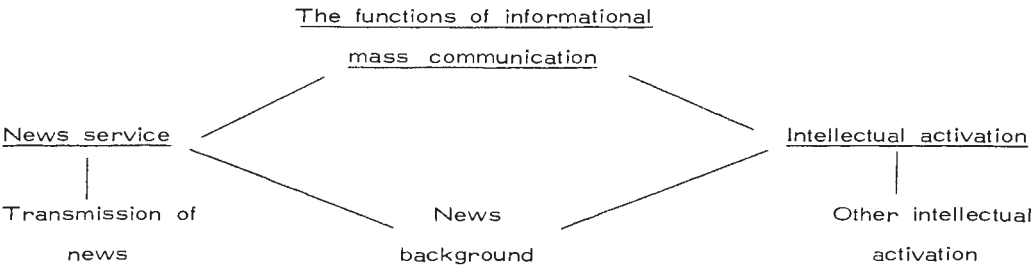
News background is the particular part of intellectual activation whose purpose is to provide the

background information necessary for the comprehension of news. We can also say that news background commentary is distinguished from other intellectually activating programs by the fact that the topic of a typical news background program is determined by the actual news of the day (or of some recent days), while the topics of other intellectually activating radio and television programs are not restricted to the actual news material. News background information can be provided either in special current events programs or in connection with ordinary newscasts.

We can distinguish between two kinds of news background information:

- (1) terminological background to the news: difficult or abstract concepts that are involved in the language used by the news broadcast are explained and illustrated by means of concrete examples,
- (2) general background to the news: information about the social, historical and geographical circumstances which must be known in order to understand the news.

The functions of informational mass communication can thus be represented graphically by the following picture:



(News background is the common domain of the spheres of news service and intellectual activation.)

The difference between the two main functions

So far I have characterized the difference between the transmission of news and the intellectual activation only by saying that the mere transmission of news "does not build any intellectual wholes out of the messages it offers" and "does not provide any systematic background to the news", while intellectual activation does these things. Now I shall describe the difference in more detail:

Transmission of news	Intellectual activation
deals with concrete, real events without aiming at generalizations	deals with general ideas (although it may use) concrete cases as examples for illustration)
is tied to the topical events of the day	is not bound to topical events
is offered the framework of daily news-casts composed of diverse messages which are not factually connected with one another	is offered in a more or less systematic form composed of messages which are factually connected with one another by the general idea they want to illustrate
the selection of messages (news selection) is based on the extent to which the listener's daily life is affected by the event reported, independent of whether the listener is aware of this effect or not (= external criterion of information)	must be based on phenomena which the listener or viewer already recognizes as important (= internal criterion of information)
is documentary	is best when using fiction, with or without documentary material
↓	↓
"EXTENDS THE SENSES"	"STARTS BRAIN ACTIVITY"

Summing up, we can illustrate the difference between these two functions by saying that the transmission of news acts as an extension of the senses of the listeners or of the viewers, while intellectual activation works as a starter of brain activity. The transmission of news only serves to extend our sensory perception to include phenomena which do not occur within our immediate physical environment. News transmission expands the environment from which we have information comparable to sensory perception.

The transmission of news as an extension of the senses has its own special traits, which are not always taken into account by the criticisms directed against the passivity of news reception. In fact a certain passivity of information reception is quite natural in the reception of news, just as the reception of information via the senses is mostly passive. Typical news reception, like normal sensory perception, does not arouse immediate reactions, either emotional or intellectual, not to mention any immediate action. (News about a catastrophe is an exception from this rule.). All the same, the transmission of news may have a lasting effect on the cognitive processes occurring in the listener's brain. News transmission supplies material for the cognitive processes. We can even claim that the lasting effect is the deeper, the more factual and undramatic the transmission and reception of news themselves become.

These ideas about the "passivity" of the immediate reception of news as a condition for the lasting effect of the transmission are reasonable from the point of view of the theory of semantic information (see, e.g. Ahmavaara, Informaatio, Helsinki 1969 (in Finnish)). Similar ideas, even though for different reasons, have been presented by Göran Palm in his book "En orättvis betraktelse".

An immediate active reaction is, I think, unnatural in the reception of news. Only in the case of intellectual activation must we expect such an immediate active reaction. As its lasting effect, successful intellectual activation creates a critical attitude towards common prejudices.

Remarks on the problem "How to get a message through?"

We speak of the problem "How to get a message through?" often in three different senses without always distinguishing them from one another, i.e.

- 1) in the meaning of exposure to the message,
- 2) in the meaning of initiation of some cognitive process by the message, and
- 3) in the meaning of "comprehension" of the message, as tested by means of interviewing the listeners of the viewers afterwards.

A message has been gotten through in sense 1 as soon as it has been observed. No cognitive processes – except the perception of the message – are involved, and no problems of "understanding" arise; the understanding is in this case trivial and occurs as soon as the message is perceived. There is a special category of news messages where we can be satisfied when the message has been gotten through in sense 1. This is the case of news messages composed either of a documentary film or of a description of a concrete event in terms of concrete notions. This kind of news can be called concrete news. Concrete news does not need any background information to be comprehended. Background is necessary only for abstract news, i.e. for news whose verbal formulation involves abstract notions (even though the reported case itself is a concrete event of real life).

Only messages whose purpose is intellectual activation must be gotten through in sense 2 in addition to sense 1. These messages must start some immediate cognitive process in the brain of the listener or of the viewer. This is necessary in giving background information for news, as well as in other intellectually activating programs.

There are several conditions for getting a message through in sense 2:

- as the starting point of the program we must choose something which is important to the listeners or the viewers,
- the message itself must be new and surprising insofar as it really contains information or new knowledge; a message whose content is already known does not start any cognitive processes,
- intellectual entertainment must be involved in the way in which the message is offered (avoiding slowness of thought, shifting the point of view and presenting new ideas and new facts swiftly),
- the language in which the message is given must be 1) precise, 2) as concrete as possible, 3) without metaphors which are difficult to understand, and 4) without clumsy phrases and sentences; in short: language which is both semantically and syntactically correct and not too difficult is required,
- dramatization and emotional loading must be controlled so as to support the information contained in the message.

The last condition presupposes that we must offer to the viewers or the listeners some possibility of identification (e.g. avoidance of too peculiar performers or staging) but, on the other hand, we must repress excessive emotional identification by using some means of estrangement. This is necessary in order to encourage a critical attitude, which helps the listener or viewer to understand the information involved in the message.

Getting a message through in sense 3 is a problematic issue. Can we depend at all upon interviewing techniques in attempting to answer the question "How to get a message through?"? I think that the behavioristic methods we have relied upon so far are too rough to give much information on such a complex problem. Thus we can hardly so far give any "empirically verified" answer to the question "Has a message gone through?". However, this is a problem that I do not consider in detail here.

CONSCIOUSNESS-INDUSTRY AND DEMOCRACY

by

N-B. Stormbom

The word "consciousness-industry" (Bewusstseinsindustrie) is a term used, and presumably devised, by the well-known West German author and social critic Hans Magnus Enzensberger. By it he means the mass communication media in general, and the electronic media, i.e. radio and television, in particular.

According to Enzensberger, everywhere, in all of the developed technocratic social systems existing today, socialist as well as capitalist, democratic as well as authoritarian, a clear trend is observable toward the use of the mass media to control and guide the state of mind and opinions of the majority. This is the same as an attempt to perpetuate the present hegemonies and systems, to fortify the position of the institutions and groups at present in power, to prevent changes or development. Instead of the earlier material poverty, we are now threatened by the danger of spiritual poverty. The individual's freedom of choice and his possibility of affecting decision-making within the society is becoming more and more imaginary and less of a reality. This is true also in democratically governed countries, where the banner of multiple values is very conspicuously upheld. In reality there are, on the one hand, the masses of people without actual political influence over whose heads decisions can be made allowing collective suicide - and on the other hand, an ever decreasing group in which all political power is concentrated. According to Enzensberger we are moving towards a new oligarchy.

Thus a majority of the people in the developed lands, with the exception of some desperately rebelling students and isolated hippie groups, are moderately resigned to this state of affairs, and accept it. Enzensberger blames this to a large extent on the exploitation of the consciousness-industry. By this means the people can be offered, on the one hand, amusement and opium in the form of "harmless" entertainment guaranteed conservative, and on the other hand one-sided or downright false information supporting the existing power structure. Information which is disadvantageous to the governing groups is suppressed.

One could perhaps claim that Enzensberger is exaggerating and overgeneralizing. Nevertheless, it seems to me that the tendency which he describes is clearly observable at least to some extent everywhere, although its strength and emphasis may vary. In a capitalist, market-economy country these mechanisms work in a slightly different way from a dictatorially governed country in which a socialist ideology prevails. But they are operating in both, and in both their purpose is the same: to cement the existing system to maintain the power structure, to obstruct the spreading of new "dangerous" knowledge and criticism, to prevent the acquisition of information which might lead to alterations in the social structure.

Of some European countries with a democratic mode of government and a mixed economic system - perhaps not the least being Finland - one can say that there various interest groups are at present fighting among themselves for the control of the electronic mass media like dogs over a juicy bone, with the aim of employing these media to gain the upper hand and thus ensure their own power position. Even if they don't achieve quite this much, they can at least try to guard against others gaining advantages and to make sure that nothing adverse to themselves and their goals comes to the knowledge of the public. This attitude - which unfortunately but indisputably dominates rather clearly in our own beloved Finland - is far from the principle of free speech. We can talk about freedom of speech in a deep voice during ceremonial and electoral speeches, but in practice we hardly ever wish to grant it to any other than our own interest group, whether this be of an ideological, commercial or religious nature.

Representative and parliamentary democracy has undoubtedly, despite its weaknesses, been the best form of government invented or tested up to the present day from the point of view of the individual; it provides on the average, the most freedom, security, justice and means of influence. Nevertheless it is becoming more and more clear that in its present form it threatens to become too rigid and slow to fulfill its function in highly developed and continually rapidly changing technocratic and

industrialized societies. We seem, infact, to be headed toward a state of affairs in which, despite democratic principles and regulations, decisions strongly affecting the individual's life and destiny are made by a steadily decreasing circle, over the heads of the great majority. Even in countries with the firmest traditions and strongest regulations, democracy threatens to become more and more illusory and oligarchy more of a reality. And those to whose advantage it is to maintain and strengthen such a trend have found a first-rate weapon in the consciousness-industry.

Is there a solution to this? Can democracy be developed in a more flexible, and at the same time deeper direction than at present, so that it will offer and guarantee to the individual real possibilities of affecting political decisions in today's and tomorrow's rapidly changing world? Or will the citizen become increasingly alienated, held together and disciplined by means of the consciousness-industry's false world and untrue information, one of a puppet-like mass exploited without restrictions for the good of the small political and economic governing group (until the day when nuclear war, catastrophic pollution or the exhaustion of natural resources brings a final solution to all problems).

It is not possible here to go in more detail into the real meaning of this fundamental and highly intricate question. But let us assume at least as a working hypothesis that realistic possibilities of salvation still exist. In this case, and if Enzensberger's assertion that the consciousness-industry being and important medium of present mis-direction are true - which I believe they are - we are faced with the following question: how can this be corrected? How can the mass media, and in particular the electronic media, which are the most widespread and effective, and which in Finland and many other countries are publicly owned, be changed from a weapon in the hands of the oligarchy to a real servant of democracy.

The question can be approached from two starting points: individuality and universality.

Even today, a serious mistake made by many critically-oriented intellectuals with regard to the mass media, and in particular to television, is to assume an unconditionally negative and thus sterile attitude toward these media. Any criticism of the consciousness-industry which demands this of its media is meaningless and absurd. It is as absurd as a proposal to liquidate industrialized society as a whole. The only means for the individual who wishes to fight actively against the drawbacks of the consciousness-industry is to enter into the game himself and try to work from the inside taking advantage of the industry's own channels, its own conditions and its own hidden conflicts.

The rapid development of the consciousness-industry to a key-position in the modern world and society, according to Enzensberger, radically changes the intellectual's social roles and position. Whether he likes it or not, even whether he is aware of it or not, he becomes an accomplice in this industry whose destiny depends on him just as his on it, and whose main tendency today, to reinforce the power of various authorities, is in conflict with his own wishes. He becomes an accomplice of the consciousness-industry because he is necessary to it, and in time, it to him (he is not able to avoid its tentacles, if we want to put it that way). Even if I could imagine a "creative" individual, carefully guarding his moral inviolability, who individually succeeded in escaping the tentacles of the consciousness-industry, this would not really in the long run be a gain, but rather the opposite. The only result would be that another would take his place, presumably one more opportunistic and less resistant, and the general tendency toward uniformity and power reinforcement would continue, perhaps at increasing speed.

An individual who does not wish to submit to becoming a direct or indirect tool of oligarchical

endeavor should not, therefore, try to remain outside but, on the contrary, should in one way or another become involved, but not without reservations, and not by allowing the system to corrupt him. He should, in a certain sense, sabotage his exploiters and their aims, insofar as their real objective is the preservation of the prevailing power relations and the hindrance of continued democratic development.

In this way we might possibly reach a situation in which the role of the intellectual is no longer that of an accomplice in Enzensberger's sense. One in which the intellectual is no longer involved in furthering and perpetuating the oligarchy, nor does he allow other to do it, but is helping to guide the consciousness-industry onto a road the signposts of which are freedom of information, open discussion, critical deliberation, intellectual activation of the public, the arousal of the public to individual thought and commitment. The consciousness-industry then becomes a medium of information instead of one of sedation. Thus the mass media become an instrument in the formation of realistic conditions for rejuvenated democracy by widening the field of information and acquainting people with the social developments and problems which face them.

If we wish to examine the relationship between the consciousness-industry and democracy from a general point of view, we can choose as our starting point, for example, that taken by the Finnish Broadcasting Company's LRP-Group in their program policy deliberations. They have divided broadcasting company activity into three main groups according to the primary guiding motivation. The types are commercial, ideological and informational, as mentioned in Ahmavaara's presentation above. We shall here again briefly review these types.

The commercial aspect of the Broadcasting Company's program activity is regulated by the financial structure and the ideology of the consumer society.

The aim of the programs is to draw as many consumers as possible to radio and television, so that advertisements, in other words incitement, based on suggestion, to buy a product, reach the largest possible audience. Commercially-oriented and -controlled mass media activity can never serve truly democratic aims, since the need to "sell" which is characteristic of such activity can never form a suitable basis for information transmission with the purpose of providing new knowledge significant to people's view of the world.

We can speak of ideological program activity when the starting point is the "truth" as proclaimed by a particular social theory or as experienced by a particular ideologically homogenous group. This type of media activity can also as be called authoritarian. It has generally arisen in societies where the social order is strongly centred in the hands of the political leadership. This leadership, whether it be a dictator, a government or a party, dictates the form of activity of the mass media and their program policies. Ideologically directed mass media activity also cannot work to the benefit of truly democratic aims, because it transmits only such a world view as is consistent with the prevailing ideology and censors any material which is inconsistent with it.

Informational media activity tries deliberately to avoid the censorship which may result when ideological material of the foregoing type is part of program activity. This does not mean that such ideological "truths" should be excluded, on the contrary they should also be included in informational program activity. It only means, as I have mentioned, the necessity of avoiding ideological censorship. This is possible if program activity as a whole includes various ideological views side by side, which thus cancel out the information barriers by each. The principles of the informational mass

media activity should be derived from the general concept of information, which means that different world views are approached as alternative assumptions rather than as ideological truths. To take a concrete example, this means that Marxism and Christianity must appear side by side in program activity so that their messages can compete under equal conditions with regard to the public.

It is apparent that the first two types of media activity, namely commercial and ideological, serve to perpetuate the prevailing systems and the need of those with power to keep this power in their grasp. Only the form of activity described above as informational can in my opinion serve as a basis from which the mass media can offer the public the greatest possible amount of the most correct information about the world around us and its problems, and so lead to a broadening and deepening of democracy.

The Finnish Broadcasting Company has been purposefully aiming in this direction for the last 4-5 years. Something has perhaps also been achieved, although the opposition of certain economic, religious and political power institutions and their leaders has been, and still is, severe. In order to secure these aims certain social measures are necessary, such as the revision of broadcasting legislation in a more progressive spirit, but above all it requires a greatly increasing and deepening recognition, both in politically active circles as well and in the society as a whole, of the nature of the truly democratic frame of mind: tolerance, permission of opinions and views other than one's own, an awareness of conflicts and discussion of problems, an attempt at making decisions on the basis of information as many-sided accurate and widespread as possible with the greatest possible number of the members of society taking part in the decision-making process.

How can this kind of awareness be spread? This is how: by taking advantage of the channels offered by the mass media. They are of course guarded by strong battalions: battalions made up of the tin soldiers of foolishness, the stooges of power and slippery careerists, idle phraseologists who have outlived their time. But even so the position is perhaps not entirely hopeless. The development of the past year justifies, I think, despite setbacks, a cautious long-range optimism. Perhaps the day will really dawn when the consciousness-industry will not obscure but clarify our awareness when it will make the public become conscious and will serve not oligarchy, but democracy. The battle over the direction and content of the mass media continues. It will characterize the 1970's Finland as in many other societies.

DISCUSSION

(Chairman: Mr. Peltola)

Professor SMYTHE:

I enjoyed Stormbom's paper. I would like to see develop some of the understanding of the strategy and tactics of the consciousness industry. There is a sociologist called Thomas who did a study of the Polish peasant and one remark he made seems to be very important to remember. He said "When we define a situation as real it is real in its consequences", and therefore the definitional problem is where I would begin with my comment on the paper. It seems that the definition of commercial programming in the program strategy should be considered. You have a separate category for ideological considerations. You have a separate category for ideological considerations.

I would suggest that the proper place for the commercial segment is under the ideological. It is an ideology, or confession. I notice in Canada and in other nations outside the USA a tendency to regard advertising as not being an ideology, and I think this is a hangover from the 18th century when advertising was innocent and naive and informative, but today advertising is neither innocent nor naive. It is a manipulative skilful and ideologically thorough all-view of life, as one encounters it in the US, that consuming commodities is a sufficient goal of existence, the basis of life, that the whole system depends on it. I have found that graduate students at the University of Illinois seriously believe that when they buy some commodity it extends their personality, and when asked if it does not, they have difficulty in explaining that it does not, they really believe it does. The anthropologist Jules Henry in a book "Culture against Man" American, describes the point of view of the consumer society:

"Insatiably desiring, infinitely plastic, totally placid and always a bit sleepy, unpredictably labile and disloyal to products, basically woolly-minded and non-obsessive about traditional truth, relaxed and undemanding with respect to canons of traditional philosophy, indifferent to its values and easily moved to buy whatever at the moment seems to help his underlying inadequacies, this is pecuniary philosophy's conception of man and woman in our culture. Since it is a very contemptuous one, it appears that Madison Avenue is not so much the street of dreams as McCall's magazine has called it, but rather the alley of contempt housing thousands who through the manufacture of advertising pour their scorn upon the population."

It is formalistic, I would content, to segregate commercial components in your mass media from the ideological or confessional. This is an ideology, this is a faith which people confess every time they buy something.

Professor AHMAVAARA:

Professor Smythe's remark that commercial mass communication is ideological, is indeed true, and I did not claim in my paper that this was not the case.

Professor SMYTHE:

I just disagree that the ideology implicit in advertising is not coherent or explicit. There is the whole capitalist establishment rationalizing in regular statements of its beliefs. As long as you have three categories of communication there is an implicit suggestion that they each deserve some quota of time or program attention. If there are two, then the conservatives have only one bite at the cherry instead of two, and the third reason it seems to me that if any of you are Marxistically inclined, two makes a better dialectical package of categories than three.

Mr. NKOSI:

The idea of a free market of ideas, a system whereby you can have contending ideologies playing successfully against each other, the best one winning. The trouble with this concept is that in a capitalist society, for instance, it does not sufficiently underline the historical layers and structures which are already in existence, which must be broken down so that the person with the new ideology that goes against the grain of that society is already fighting with one hand tied behind his back. You have to really accept the fact that there is a main ideology which you can turn to attack and this leads to the implication of just how disinterested people can be when they control the media.

Professor JYRÄNKI:

I would like to raise a point also dealt with by Ahmavaara which might be somewhat provocative. One refers to democracy as such that the nation gets the power rulers they want. What would then

be a form of mass media which the nation itself wants? Is it then according to Ahmavaara informative, commercial or confessional? If it is commercial, what decisions should be made, for this is one of the main faults presented against the broadcasting function recently, the people being forcibly fed such information which they don't want. Taking into account the criticism of Ahmavaara and Stormborn against commercial mass media information that it strangles oligarchy and not democracy. Will such a mass media national power turn to what should be the broadcasting policy? Will a total autonomy follow a complete independence from all political organs and what would then follow? Who will choose what information is to be given? Who controls and says what is right information, and how?

Mr. E.S. REPO:

In two words it is "correct information"; in all respects.

Mr. KALLIO:

I should like to draw attention to one information figure which is regarded as autonomous, i.e. BBC. The BBC has had difficulty with its role and there are some very interesting pieces in this in the past few years. When ITV started up in Britain, the BBC found that in order to keep the audiences, they had to change their basic theme of programmes, and during the 3 years I was there, I found that the BBC was autonomous from the parties. It had to take the opinion of the people into account and that was expressed in the programmes, the standard of which went nearer and nearer to the ones of the ITV. Thus I wonder what is really the answer to the presented questions. Is the radio corporation better off under parliamentary control or as an autonomous public corporation?

Mr. E.S. REPO:

This attitude BBC made themselves 3 or 4 years ago and finished recently, and measured the programming by the amount of viewers. This general fault, accepted as a natural fact, was seen when ITV's administrative Chairman moved to the BBC and the BBC president resigned. BBC had lost its previous position.

Mr. VAKKILAINEN:

One problem which arises is pragmatic: with which criteria new information should be chosen -- and this comes back again to the principle of ideology. As far as the total autonomy is concerned there are great dangers also in another direction: that such a manipulative machinery could go in quite another direction and the oligarchy would further grow.

Professor LITTUNEN:

I think this autonomy concept should be divided into two. One being autonomy from suppression, idea suppression, autonomy from censorship and restrictions, and another quite different type of autonomy which is autonomy from contacts with the people, from feed-back. If we make this division, we can perhaps understand where the autonomy is impossible or results in complete disaster in terms of the information and where the autonomy is required. Autonomy is certainly required in this first type, from restrictions and suppression. Autonomy from feed-back is really dangerous as it leads to isolation of the communicators from the people. Intellectual snobbery and aristocracy lead to populism.

Perhaps we need to discuss how we force the communicators to have the feed-back. People are so easy and comfortable with these ideas and unless there are institutional rules on how to get the feed-back, it doesn't seem to work. Perhaps the rise of populism in many countries result largely from the differences in the intellectual niveaux of the communications between the communicator and the recipient. The present parliamentary control has very many difficulties; another solution would be better.

Dr. PIETILÄ:

Radio and TV are only one form of mass media and he does not think that informative ideology can be realized until it can be realized in all forms of communications media. As it is now people get confused and angry with electronic media which alone try to be informative.

Dr. NIITAMO:

Pointed out some theoretical aspects of information from the point of view of a basic distinction between probability and preference, i.e. what is likely to occur, on the one hand, and what is desired to occur, on the other. In transmitting information through the mass media and in discussing the criteria for selection of information for presentation, one should always regard both of these aspects especially relevant with regard to social affairs. And naturally one should give emphasis to new information deviating from the most probable course of affairs along with an investigation of the desirability of the perspectives opened up by the new information.

Mr. KALLIO:

Would like a solution for the opposition to trying to make an informative radio and television.

Mr. E.S. REPO:

To Pietilä, not worried about television. Information that the receiver does not wish is disliked by him, and television does not give such freedom of choice as for example the press. New information is that which affects the listener, and which he needs for his life. Who chooses? This depends on competence; attempts should be made to find the most competent person to give such information.

Professor SMYTHE:

I would like to refer to the Jyränki problem, that of legislation for broadcasting. We should acknowledge that the name of the broadcast game is power, who has it and for what purposes, and in this connection I would like to comment on the observation of Mr. Stormbom that television is not now a major factor in the economy, and Mr. Ahmavaara did not define advertising in what I regard as the realistic way. Advertising on TV is the sales of audiences to advertisers, not the sale of messages to advertisers – the delivery is what one buys. Schiller's book on the subject I recommend. The Canadian experience is informative. In 1929 a Royal Commission declared that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation should be the national broadcasting system. Temporarily, private stations might operate, but only under regulation from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. By 1957 the situation had changed. Commercial TV had been introduced through the CBC and private stations and the Royal Commission in that year recommended that the CBC no longer be the regular Tory organization, but that a new regular Tory commission modeled on the American should be established to regulate on a parity CBC networks and stations and private stations. The situation has deteriorated at the present time to the point where the current proposals from the private sector are that CBC should be merely a program producing organization and that all stations and all networks should be private. This is the historical development, and when you admit advertising in, it is only a question of time until it rules the roost and there is no room for anyone else. This brings up the question of democracy and I am reminded of Mark Twain's question of "who are you neutral against?" If we lived in an egalitarian world democracy, this should be simple to practice; but in the present situation it is not simple and it is a question of how you can accommodate the pressures to try to preserve the traditional values which will be eroded and displaced by the cultural imperialist as it continues to grow. A question of digging in your heels and institutionally setting up road blocks to protect traditional values against this kind of erosion.

Miss STARCK:

Mentioned the hatred of television in Finland spoken of by Pietilä. This should be looked into and the reasons for it, and she felt that a large segment of the public has expected entertainment and has been fed heavy programs which they don't understand.

Professor LITTUNEN:

The problem with feed-back is that research carried out in Finland and in most other countries does not appropriately measure comprehension and public reaction. He referred to the work carried out by Peltola which would give new approaches to feed-back research. Another approach is the recreation of another system of nominative control. We must begin with the assumption that there is an unavoidable nominative control anyway. So far the control has been concentrated on restrictive systems, whereas what we hardly have is the feed-back control system. How can this be done? Possibly with a semi-parliamentary system. Referring to his previous comments of intellectual snobbery: when we combine inefficiency at the intellectual cognitive level with the disgusting elements of what the receiver gets, we should be alarmed, and only then (referring to the hatred of TV programs).

With the semi-parliamentary system it could be that it closes out first all those forms of control which are involved in any means with state or public political machinery organization, so members of Parliament should not be members of the governing board. The Parliament should only be the elective body for the board. There is still another problem. Maybe the governing board watches parties. This could be eliminated by cutting out their worry of becoming reelected to the board. How can this be done? Simply by the fact they won't be reelected anyhow. Any given member of the board can only serve once; this rotation would be democratic.

Dr. HEMANUS:

Not enough stress has been made on the social nature of information. He felt that the experiences of the last few years in Finland should have given the result of less naive belief that information should be unbiased and should not emotionally bother the public. There are people who are affected by the information of world affairs by the broadcasting organization and feel they are threatened by what they hear.

Professor JYRÄNKI:

Continued on the semi-parliamentary organization.

Discussion continued on affairs in Finland.

Mr. NKOSI:

I find what you say is true, that the need for democratic control of the mass media is world wide. Can any of you do the thinking for the Africans themselves and devise some strategy for this. The basic problem in Africa is one of security, state security. We are dealing here with societies which have tremendous forces at work, which have to be carefully balanced in order to create some sense of continuity. In that kind of situation for journalists to have any basic control of the media is a terribly difficult issue. The only analogy I can think of is to take the situation of say Britain during the war. I don't really know to what extent you can have freedom of control over the media in a situation where the country is in a state of emergency. The Cuban argument about this question of the freedom of expression, as well as control, has also to do with the question of what they feel they are threatened with from outside. In other words could we in the Third World infiltrate the media now controlled by the present ruling oligarchies, or should one just ignore this kind of discussion and engage in a revolutionary war. The Third World is really in a very revolutionary situation! The

question of democratic control is probably very academic for the third world countries and maybe it is too escapist. Maybe there is some kind of limited strategy that any of you can suggest about this problem of the Third World.

Mr. KASVIO:

Wanted to expand the concept of getting the message through from the first sense in Ahmavaara's presentation (see above) towards the second sense, which would mean that a message has only gone through on the condition that the information presented has left the listener with a slightly changed and expanded view of the world. And, moreover, it only has gone through if the new information is taken in account in the listener's behavior, so that it becomes more rational as the information accumulated presupposes such changes. An example of cases in which a message has not gone through this far is information about weapons of mass destruction -- it has been exposed to and recognized, but no action models are sought for and, instead, a fatalistic attitude is born/created. We may here blame the limitations of information presented for neglecting the action models, i.e. practical advice to ordinary people concerning the ways in which each individual might act in order to control the situation. Action models in response to new problems naturally create a conflict with the prevailing power formations. Certain action models have been traditionally institutionalized, e.g. as a pressure group, whereas other action models, appropriate as responses to new situations and new information, are not given attention or even legitimization by the conventional institutions regulating the use of social resources. A free channel is needed for these new action models to be propagated, and an informational broadcasting medium would be ideal for such a purpose -- for increasing the variety of action models at the people's disposal.

Mr. KALLIO:

Referred to Stormbom's paper at the beginning and expressed surprise at the idea that because of the consciousness industry there is an oligarchy developing which is functioning over people. He understands that this oligarchy has always been there, and maybe the only thing that can be said is that now people are more aware of it than before due to the consciousness industry. This oligarchy has always had easy access to mass media. They usually know much more about what affects the people. He does not think this oligarchy has been caused by the consciousness industry.

Mr. STORMBOM:

There has been more or less oligarchy always when looked at from historical records, but he believes that there has been a short interval after the break through of democracy when one could live in good hope that some kind of democracy, real democracy, would arise. It seems as if after the mass media have reached their point of effectivity, these hopes will again decrease all over the world.

Professor LITTUNEN:

We should be cautious of giving advice to the practical question which was raised by Nkosi because the situation is completely unheard of for us. I think that if Africa is in a revolutionary situation, that should not excuse the intellectuals of staying out of mass media no matter who controls it, because what is needed after the African revolution is the capacity and training for the intellectual process and for the mass media. I think that it would be absolutely essential to work about the same way as described by Stormbom, knowing how it works.

Miss JARVA:

I wonder about the receiver of the information who has had to listen to much information which does

not seem to be important to him. I feel that during this discussion the majority of the speakers have had a most undemocratic attitude, that we know what is information, we know how to deal with it, that we are the people who say what should be important for general public. I don't consider it important what the person remembers from the information he has received from the electronic media; I would prefer that he forgets it. I think the most important thing is what happens during the program. We should then judge the ability of the listener to receive this information, this normally being forgotten in the informative program policy. The mass media influences the ability of receiving information; it does not matter if the communicators realize this or not. I would like to raise the point of how to help people receive and understand information and to use it. I would prefer the discussion to be on de-centralized mass media, of the mass media going to the normal person. I feel that mass media influences in a way which has not been sufficiently researched. People use mass media because of their lack of social contacts. I feel that we should try to return to direct feed-back -- to what occurred when radio began; this would tend towards democratic communication, contacts and a society of consciousness.

Mrs. SUOMINEN:

Feels personally that the transmission of news (as described in Ahmavaara's paper) always has the possibility of personal comments and an individual selection process, the choice of news material becoming subjective. Feels that no news agency is capable of being completely objective in its choice of news raw material and the presentation of such. Feels that in the background explanations of news, one must have some kind of comment, and historical backgrounds should be given more than at present. News of an individual murder or happening is given much more space than for structural violence (of a general kind); this situation should be altered.

CHAIRMAN stated that this very problem (selection of news) has been carefully analyzed in a recent report on news policy prepared in the section for LRP of the FBC.¹

Mr. E.S. REPO:

In reply to Jarva states that the message should be delivered with general communication and contacts. Information is either democratic, fascist, communist, etc. depending on the person selecting the material. There is always the problem of what to inform, this being a basic problem with such instruments as broadcasting. One can either manipulate or try to be objective by getting the most possible correct facts of the event. He then gave examples of subjectivity in reporting events (e.g. the Czechoslovakian invasion).

Mr. AARNIO:

Feels also that the content of the information is of great importance.

Professor SMYTHE:

My remarks are in the nature of background. I have been listening with great interest and trying to get a perspective on what you have been discussing amongst yourselves. I don't know that the background comments are very valuable but I'll make them anyhow.

It seems to be in a large sense that what we are talking about is a strategy for a third nation communications policy. We are familiar with the argumentation about socialist realism and all the difficulties which have been expressed on that subject. I would like to suggest that what we have all grown up with and have growing and developing in the mass media as the technology developed. If

¹ Summary available on request.

you look back you would have a job to explain what I mean, but the history of English literature in the 17th century is for English-speaking world at any rate the genesis of the doctrines of capitalist realism. The soap opera equals Richardson's novels; the policy, the tactics have been consistent whether it was in the case of the novel or radio or television. We haven't really got a detached perspective for ourselves when we are in a nation which is in a nether world between the super powers. The problems which I hear you talking about are very understandable, but we seem to be unaware of the extent to which we are unconscious carriers of the assumptions and doctrines of capitalist realism into a historically unprecedented period, namely that of small nations in a world dominated by two or three big super powers.

Why not then to have a better perspective for ordering the questions of tactics and policy in a country like Finland or Canada or an African country. But there is no reason to assume that the same tactics are going to be applicable in Finland, in Canada or in the African country. It may be that there will be some general principles, but I suspect that the tactics will be historically specific to the situation of the country. Thus in the case of Mr. Nkosi's hypothetical African country, a sensible tactic might be for the technicians to feed in programs favoring the consumption of fish in order to produce an explosion in the native population which may unseat an unpopular oligarchy.

CHAIRMAN suggested that they should try to find the means by which the development and implementation of this informative program policy could be brought about.

Mr. KALLIO:

One thing which must be taken into account is that if you are accepting the theme that the function of informative communication is to make a socialist society, I am sure that we will not succeed in trying to continue an informative communication policy.

Mr. KASVIO:

We have various institutions in our society which try in different ways to reach the same goal and give the same type of information. He did not mean that the function of informative program policy would become a class struggle, but that it would contribute to a sound development of society by operating for human and progressive goals such as democratization.

Mr. E.S. REPO:

If we look at things in the long run, the society is proceeding towards socialism, and the more the society is given information the more quickly it goes in that direction. Personally I feel that the function of broadcasting as a guiding or control means is quite natural in some countries, but I am against this in the countries of, for example, Africa, Asia, South America, or in other words the whole Third World. The information givers in these countries must transmit information to the receivers which will lead them to the use of the information. In this way I feel that the broadcasting function in such lands is at present naturally a leading means of control. It should not be on a national basis, as is the case in some Arab countries at the present. A dangerous event is what I have called broadcasting imperialism, the representatives of which being various large American commercial firms. I was very surprised when I attended an Asian Radio Union conference in Auckland to find three American representatives of firms in Asia as full members of the union working on a commercial basis. This type of imperialism is spreading. West Germany has a firm in Hong Kong, I think, and as I understand it, the idea is to widen this system. In Germany the idea was more or less initiated by Mr. Springer, who is presently for some the German figure of imperialism to the whole world. These are the kinds of things which come as obstacles to the free transmission of information. Political interest towards broadcasting is continuously increasing, and

the problem is how this development can be stilled.

Professor LITTUNEN:

Summarized a study made in Lapland about how the coming of television had effected the laplanders. The focus of interest had shifted from informative programs to programs of entertainment. This might have been due to the fact that people in this deprived area had learned about the better conditions in the South and they had no choice than either to stop watching the information they disliked, or move to Sweden! This information received by the laplanders was the same whether given by the state radio or commercial radio. Information avoidance was the same with regards to all mass media after a couple of years -- radio, press and television. If this interpretation is true, the lesson should be that when and if we give the information about the things that are bad in Lapland or elsewhere, we should give not only long-range goals about a better society, but also short-range goals of what to do about it, i.e. practical action models referred to earlier.

Dr. HEMANUS:

Feels that it is difficult for people to get used to the fact that television is no longer just there for entertainment, but is also one of the information media and should be looked on as such.

Dr. NIITAMO:

The distinction between the service function and the autonomous function as mentioned in Ahmavaara's paper should be kept in mind. The autonomous function is the social-critical function, and it should be accepted that broadcasting with a social-critical role runs in conflict with prevailing opinions. Information without conflict is no information; this is why one should form conflict to give information.

Professor LITTUNEN:

The conflict acceptance depends on the degree of security the public has. There has been two kinds of insecurity, the economic insecurity, e.g. in Lapland, and the feeling of security for the future which the priveleged groups have.

Professor SMYTHE:

I think what I was going to say was just said. In the Western World what I call the Dr. Strangelove phenomena of the right wing gets very up tight over homosexuality or plain sex education programs, or in the case of Canada any favorable treatment of the Black Panthers in the USA. We have had these episodes and do have them in Canada now, and this last hour's discussion sounds familiar to me. I suggest that what we are dealing with is a kind of epidemic which rises from similar situations around the world and which is chronic and which we shall have to learn to live with and the strategy and tacts developed for handling this particular episode should be studied to use for the future because this is going to be repeated.

It was agreed that the formulation of conclusions on the following morning will be made in two parts: (1) a general statement of the points and suggestions raised in the conference to serve also as a press release, and (2) a list of ideas and advice for defending and striving toward a free and informational communication policy, i.e. a "cook book". A working group was appointed to prepare suggestions for them, composed of Dr. Nordenstreng, Mr. Peltola, Mr. Romantschuk and Professor Smythe.

THIRD DAY:

FORMULATION OF CONCLUSIONS

(Chairman: Dr. Nordenstreng)

In the discussion based on the drafts of the working group, the following contributions, among others, were presented:

Mrs. HAUSEN:

What kind of a policy ought we really to have internationally? This follows as far as I can see the pattern that the small countries -- those who are struggling to free themselves from dependence on either the Soviet Union or the USA -- are trying to combine and to work together with the developing countries to get a third force into the field. Is it possible, or sensible, to do? This might only be short-range tactics, because no western European country would, when it comes down to it, do anything for the developing countries.

Professor SMYTHE:

I don't think that necessarily is automatic. For example as a result of the Swedish initiative in the UN, the technology of the satellites is now going to be made available for India for educational experiments involving community receivers in schools in the interest of literacy education and birth control education and birth control education, etc.

Mrs. HAUSEN:

By strategy some countries could be given aid, and not others. Is it too early to begin formulating how one should behave before the block shaping of the Soviet Union and Japan and US? What is the role of the developing countries in the future? Is it anything to take into consideration? We could speak more broadly of economical forces all over the world.

Mr. NKOSI:

My problem was that I didn't like too much the idea of a sharp division in our conception of the role of the press in different areas. That has been covered somewhat. In our references to the Third World we were trying to emphasize special problems, but we must be careful about excusing certain manipulative tendencies in the Third World which are self-serving for the oligarchies rather than serving the people. It might be better, while recognizing the special conditions in the Third World, that we should say we encourage a free flow of information. If you do have a politically acceptable framework within which the information comes, any control of it must insure that everyone receives information through it. I am bothered that the people will not have any information simply because they are not permitted to have it. We must be careful to state that we really encourage information to reach the Third World.

Professor SMYTHE:

I agree provided you put in the qualifying clause within these States or groups of States, so that you don't endorse the one way street trend of freedom of information globally, which is the stocking horse for cultural imperialism.

STATEMENT GIVEN BY THE CONFERENCE

The main themes of the round table "Communication 1980" were the new situation in the international communications traffic caused by the communication satellites, and the problem of defining the functions and aims of mass communication.

One of the points agreed on at the conference was the threatening problem posed by the lack of control by any international or global organ over the rapidly developing process of information transmission via satellite. Decisions as to the development and use of the satellites are mainly made by the two leading world powers, which operate according to their own advantage.

This situation increases considerably the possibilities of propaganda broadcasting. The satellite owners can use their devices to coordinate the transmission of information to entire continents. In satellite development the general trait seems to recur that the large industrial countries reap the economical benefit of technical advances.

The advent of the satellites reinforces still further the long prevailing situation, that the flow of information in the world is from large countries to small, and from rich countries to poor, but only to a lesser degree in the opposite direction. As a result, nations are not equal to each other as far as information service is concerned. For instance the American serial film production as well as the Anglo-Saxon wire services dominate television programs in Europe, Africa and Latin America as well as in South-East Asia.

It was the opinion of the conference that international cooperation in broadcasting, in satellite issues as well as in program production, should be developed on the basis of regional cooperative organizations such as EBU and OIRT. The first aim should be to "democratize" the regional organizations within their own sphere, so that the international exchange of programs occurs under conditions agreed by each country. On the basis of these regional organizations a global umbrella-organization could be built up in time which would at first take over only a few tasks, but which over a period of time would take on greater and greater importance. There is, also reason to support the attempt to establish a United Nations news agency and to reserve particular wavelengths for the international UN program service.

Despite international cooperation a major part of program production will nevertheless still occur on a national level. Mass communication as well as politics will continue for a long time to be of a local and national nature. The functions for which the mass media are used in each nation are therefore significant.

In the developing countries it is more or less natural that the mass communication media are used as efficiently as possible as tools for national construction. Overall general planning and consistent development work need the help of the mass communication media. This should nevertheless not mean that the mass media are used as a means of suppressing opinion. Some of the dangers connected with this could be overcome by giving authority in decision-making to the professional journalists working in the media along with democratic control by the society.

The communication problems of developing countries differ from those of developed countries. Unlike the former the mass communication media in industrial nations should not be used as tools by

the government or economic leaders. The service function of the mass communication media will best be realized from the point of view of the society as a whole when the mass media operate as autonomously as possible. It should however be noted that in that case the most important media - broadcasting - are under democratic control.

The task of mass communication thus is to improve the society's mental and material welfare by distributing new information which has a broadening effect on the individual's thinking. New information cannot by any means always be adapted without friction to the prevailing ways of thought, but the effect of friction should not be regarded as damaging; on the contrary, it is a factor which invigorates the society and contributes to sound development.

When the mass communication media are used as media of control in a developed country, as is nowadays almost always the case, the situation easily arises whereby people become mentally too dependent on the prevailing economic and political system, in capitalist as well as socialist societies. This means that mass communication is either subordinated to an ideology, the aim of which is to increase material consumption, or that thinking will be tightly tied to the prevailing political ideology; in either case the society's development may be endangered. Unless a deliberate effort is made to secure the independence of the mass media from political and economical interests, they will have a built-in tendency to direct people's thinking and activity to an increasingly narrow area, in which the private individual will have ever decreasing possibilities of affecting his society's development in the way assumed by true democracy.

DEFENSIVE STRATEGY IN SUPPORT OF THE INFORMATIVE COMMUNICATION POLICY

1. Maintenance of critical discussion of the principles of information transmission, i.e. emphasizing the importance of mass communication for the social structure (change as well as status quo), pointing out the manipulative mechanism, value boundness of all information and communicators, ideological nature of commercialism, etc. ("Discussionism" - like this group and Herbert Schiller)
2. Persistent guerilla warfare within the media by participating in the production process ("Professionalism" - as proposed by Stormbom)
3. Gradual interference within national and international bodies developing organizational regulations ("Legislationism" - like Smythe and Jyränki)
4. Introduction of critical study of mass communication and popular culture in schools ("Educationalism" - as proposed by Unesco and to be carried out in Finland)
5. Balancing critical research into the goals of mass communication with applied research into the means of getting the message through, e.g. introducing "action models" and strategies for feedback ("Feedbackism" - like studies on comprehension and alienation)